

# **DOCTORAL THESIS**

Invisible diversity: exploring the experiences of trainee  
clinical psychologists from a mixed white ethnic  
background

**NERMIN MURAT**

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### **DEDICATION**

To my Nene and Dede, it is only now that I realise the roots that you gave me.

To everyone who is still searching for a place to belong  
and to my rock who is helping me to find a place where I fit.

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## **1. ABSTRACT**

There is limited research examining the identities and experiences of those from mixed ethnic backgrounds and the research literature is almost non-existent for those who are from a mixed white ethnic (MWE) background. The existent evidence base in regards to the experiences of clinical psychology training of those from minority ethnic groups is focused on Black and ethnic minority (BME) backgrounds. This study therefore aimed to gain insight into the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white ethnic background, raising awareness of these individuals and their needs in the clinical psychology training arena.

This study adopted a qualitative approach where eight participants were recruited and in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted. Interviews were analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis.

Three main themes emerged from participants' accounts: 'the double edged sword of invisible difference', 'uncovering the undercurrents of difference' and 'that which is sought and gained'. These findings are discussed in relation to the existing literature and clinical implications are presented. Methodological considerations and areas for future research are also considered. This study makes contribution to a sparsely researched area and provides rich insight into the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE backgrounds. It is hoped the material presented here will encourage further thought, debate and study of this area.



## **2. INTRODUCTION**

'Being human is an endless effort to collect our distributed selves from all the locations where they are scattered forging them into a more coherent account of who we are' (Di Nicola, 1997).

I begin with this quote as it reflects my personal position. As I have undertaken the journey through this research I have realized that I have been attempting to piece together a coherent identity that incorporates the pieces of myself and my learning from my two, at times very different and conflicting, cultures. Perhaps so too are the participants who took part in this research, as we all journey towards defining who we are as clinical psychologists, attempting to find a comfortable fit between our personal and professional selves.

### **2.1 Introduction to this chapter**

I will begin this chapter by discussing my position in relation to this research, giving the reader the context in which the research is situated. I will then briefly discuss definitions of several key terms.

Due to the limited research on those who are from a MWE background, I will begin with discussing several concepts that may aid in understanding the experiences of these individuals. I then discuss issues around race and white identity and privilege and move on to think about the clinical psychology training arena. The role that supervision plays in thinking about the impact of race, culture and ethnicity is examined as well as the research that has been undertaken on the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists who are from BME backgrounds, from which some parallels may be drawn to MWE groups. These are tentative as those from a MWE background are in a unique position where their difference is often invisible and they are both part of the majority and minority group in training and the wider society.

Finally, I will argue that the lack of research in this area supports the use of a qualitative design in order to begin to build an evidence base to aid understanding the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background.

## **2.2 My position and how I came to this study**

As is advised by Elliott, Fischer and Rennie (1999), I will now discuss my perspective on this research. I believe that this is important so that readers can gain insight into the production of this research narrative (Miller and Glassner, 2004). This will also aid the reader to gain a greater insight into my assumptions and biases (Elliott et al, 1999).

I am a 27 year old female from a MWE background. My father is Turkish Cypriot and my mother is English. I was born in London but have been raised culturally as a Turkish Cypriot. I identify myself as mixed Turkish Cypriot and English. My relationship with my cultural and ethnic background is something that I see as fluid, ever moving and changing, and is also connected to my relationship with my parents, how I was raised, and changes in my identity as an individual and as a woman.

I see the richness of my culture but at times am blinded to this due to the struggles I have had to overcome as someone straddling two very different, and often conflicting cultures. This is especially so in relation to being a woman. I feel that my mixed background has given me chameleon like qualities, allowing me to fit into the group that I am currently part of at any one time. This has aided me to always find a way in which I can relate to others but has impacted upon my core sense of self; being able to hold this constant when other's would have it change or in the face of others difference.

I find it difficult to know where I belong, neither Turkish nor English, somewhere in between. I do not hold on to some of the practices from my Turkish culture, especially those that I see as repressing women. I have grown up in an environment where women and men are not equal and are treated very differently. I feel that I have had to fight for things in life because I am a woman and so I have fought to be equal and to be 'good enough.' This is what has led me to clinical psychology; an effort to balance what I want and value in a career with trying to please my father and make him proud of me.

So how did I come to be doing this research? Last year I was asked to be involved in organising a conference on difference and diversity in training. I agreed, somewhat reluctantly, as being involved was a struggle due to feeling overwhelmed with training and having difficulties with my research. At the time my first project had fallen through and I was embarking on a second idea

which was undertaken more out of convenience rather than passion. The conference was rewarding in ways that I had not imagined. It helped me to process some of my thoughts, feelings and issues of having a difference that is more hidden and rarely acknowledged by many, more specifically the doctorate in clinical psychology training course.

I had not acknowledged the impact of my feelings of difference, or even that I had these feelings. Presenting at the conference was one of my fellow conference organizers, Snehal Shah, who presented her research about the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from BME backgrounds (Shah, 2010). During this presentation I realised that I should be carrying out research into diversity and difference and into something that is personal to me.

Shah's (2010) presentation inspired me, especially when she spoke about her participants stating that they feel white trainees should be instigating conversations about difference and not leaving it to those who are from BME groups. I felt this really spoke to me as I constantly talk about difference and diversity teaching in training and how this could be improved; here was an opportunity to do something about it and contribute directly. This is how I devised the idea of undertaking my doctoral research into the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. This was also the beginning of my acknowledgment of my white privilege, even though I might not consider myself to be white.

I was further inspired due to the comments received by attendees of the conference where it was felt that ethnicity and diversity are difficult topics to discuss, especially in relation to oneself. Through others discussions attendees felt more aware that openness and honesty is needed. Some stated that the conference had shown them that they do not need to hide their vulnerability, which difference can often be seen as. Some felt the day had fostered a realization that they should nurture their invisible differences; the day was healing, aiding people to feel that they are not alone.

I carried out this research to highlight a group of individuals but also in my search to find out if there was some where that I belonged in order to relive my "tales" and perhaps "be free" of some also (Di Nicola, 1997).

## **2.3 Literature search strategy**

I employed a number of strategies when conducting the literature search for this study. As well as conducting an electronic literature search using the major psychology and social sciences data bases, I searched library catalogues for relevant books and articles as well as reference lists I have obtained through training. I also used search engines such as, Google and Google Scholar. References were also obtained from those who have previously carried out research into the field. I used a range of combinations of search terms including, clinical psychologists, mixed race, mixed ethnicity, acculturation, bicultural, mixed white ethnicity and identity.

## **2.4 Review strategy**

There is a seemingly non-existent literature base on trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. This lack of literature also extended to other training groups, including counselling psychology. Since there were no studies on the experiences of trainees from a mixed background, only the experiences of BME training groups were examined. Literature included examined trainees from clinical, counselling and family therapy training courses. I am aware of the issues with the generalisability of these research articles and have reviewed empirical studies as well as conceptual literature for its significance to trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background.

## **2.5 BACKGROUND**

### **2.5.1 Invisible differences and clinical psychology training**

Although this thesis will predominately focus on issues regarding ethnicity and race, it is important to note that there are an array of invisible differences that can impact upon the training experiences of clinical psychologists and their clinical work. Other examples of invisible differences include spirituality, social class, sexuality and disability.

Difference and diversity seems a neglected area in training, with many reporting inadequate preparation for working with groups such as lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals (Daniel, Roysircar, Abeles, Boyd, 2004). It is also felt that training does not prepare individuals for addressing issues of spirituality in therapy and many have relied purely on personal study

(Weiderman and Sansone, 1999 REF7A; Cassidy, 2006). Teaching on spirituality has been found to vary across training courses, with some receiving no training at all (Mills, 2010).

There is little research examining the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists with invisible differences, including the experiences of those with disabilities that are invisible. Research examining trainees with obvious disabilities show that courses are failing to attend to the needs of these individuals by lacking flexibility (Taube and Olkin, 2011).

Trainee psychologists have been found to be reluctant to disclose their invisible differences in supervision, such as sexuality, as they fear others negative evaluations (Ladany, Hill, Corbett and Nutt, 1996). It may be that lack of focus on these issues in training is contributing to the perceived unimportance of these aspects, leading to them not being disclosed.

It has been found that trainee and practicing psychologists possess low levels of positive responses to marginalized groups, such as homosexual individuals (Jones, 2000), pointing towards possible discrimination and negative attitudes towards those who are not the majority group (Whitman, 1995 cited in Daniel et al, 2004). This makes it likely that those who are considered different to the majority will keep their difference hidden.

Religion is another aspect of difference that seems to be hidden, for example, with Muslim psychology students worrying about disclosing their religious beliefs, feeling that there is a bias against religious applicants (Patel and Shikongo, 2006). It seems that there is a culture within clinical psychology that leads to spirituality being an area that is neglected. Trainees have expressed uncertainty when dealing with issues of religion and spirituality that leads to a lack of confidence and a fear of offending others (Mills, 2010). Even therapists who see themselves as religious and who feel that their spirituality influenced their career choice felt unable to discuss spirituality in professional settings (Prest, Russel and Souza, 1999). Interestingly, participants in Mills (2010) study felt comfortable addressing issues of sexuality and ethnicity.

Training in all areas of diversity, not only invisible differences, needs to be improved in order to produce culturally competent trainees (Vera, 2009) and allow open and honest discussion of all differences.

### **2.5.2 The confusion of terminology**

Here I will attempt to define some of the key terms that appear in this chapter. This has been a difficult task, as there are multiple definitions for each and many of them are often used interchangeably. This is of particular concern when attempting to ascertain the presence of such a specific group in the literature.

The term ethnicity is associated with one's social and cultural membership to a particular group whereas culture refers to one's "current practices" (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999) and is gained through interacting with others (Samuels, 2010). The term 'race' is defined as referring to one's "genetic heritage" (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). Race is a category allocated through society according to how we interpret an individual's appearance (Samuels, 2010).

The term biracial or bicultural is used by some to refer to individuals who are of a mixed race background, where parents are from two different racial groups (Dixon-Peters, 2010). This term is also used to refer to individuals who are not necessarily of mixed race or ethnicity but who negotiate two cultures; their own and the dominant one. The term multi-racial refers to an individual who is from several different ethnic or racial groups (Dixon-Peters, 2010). Attempting to study these phenomena can be problematic since those that conduct research do not give the specific definitions behind the terms they are using.

For the purpose of this study the term MWE background refers to an individual's definition of one's self as being such, as well as having at least one parent who is not from the UK. This fits with the study's theoretical standpoint, which is social constructionist, where importance is placed upon the way each individual constructs their own reality and makes sense of their world. This means that importance is placed on the way in which each participant defines themselves and their experiences. Social constructionism encourages the deconstruction of assumptions and categories that are used to make sense of others and emphasizes these categories as culturally and historically specific. Understanding is said to be constructed through social interactions which maintain patterns in society that have implications for what is considered acceptable behaviour (Burr, 2003).

### **2.5.3 The prevalence MWE individuals in clinical psychology training**

Consensus statistics show estimates that the population is comprised of 87.9% of people who identify themselves as of a white ethnic background and between 1.3% and 1.8% being of mixed origin (Office National for Statistics; ONS, 2009). The term mixed origin is not defined further and so this could include those who are of mixed race as well as those who are from MWE backgrounds. Statistics around the prevalence of those from mixed backgrounds may not show the full picture, as people who identify as being from a MWE background can choose a number of options when filling in ethnicity forms. They can identify as 'white other,' 'white British' or 'mixed other,' dependent on the options available. This means that the number of mixed white individuals residing in Britain may not be fully known, demonstrating the difficulties involved in identifying this group. Even so, the largest ethnic minority population in England is estimated as being the white other group (ONS, 2007).

Figures for the 2009 clinical psychology training intake from the Clearing House show that 3% of applications to the Clearing House were from people who identified as 'other British white' and 2% were accepted. 9% of the 'other white' ethnic group applied and 6% were accepted (Clearing House, 2009).

It is difficult to say how these figures relate to those in the population that training courses serve. However, it is clear that the academic response to this growing population has been slow and those from a MWE background seem to have gone unrecognized in the world of clinical psychology (Mansaray, 2003).

### **2.5.4 Accessing training and the experiences of those from a MWE background**

The current literature search has shown no specific data on the experiences of accessing training for those who identify as being from a MWE background. There is also no data on the experiences of this group once in training.

The data regarding the experiences of minority individuals in accessing training has been in relation to those who identify as BME individuals (e.g. Shah, 2010) and for whom being visibly different is a key factor. It is difficult to know the extent to which one can draw comparisons between this group of people and those from a MWE background, as this group have a

difference that is less identifiable by others. Also, those that appear white may decide to associate as such to avoid experiencing racism and to access the privileges associated with being white (Dixon-Peters, 2010).

Even though those from a MWE background have a difference that is not obvious, they may still have different experiences to the majority dominant group of white, middle class, female trainee clinical psychologists. Clinical psychology as a profession is based on ideas and practice that may be alien to many cultures. Individuals from ethnic minority groups have shared their difficulties in accessing support prior to training, as well as feeling that they have to compensate for their backgrounds (Canterbury Christ Church, 2002) showing the impact that difference can have on one's experience of accessing and training as a clinical psychologist.

With the lack of literature relating to the experiences of MWE trainees, both on clinical psychology and other professional training courses from which comparisons can be drawn, I will now focus on literature and theory that seems relevant in aiding the understanding of how this group might experience training and the issues they may face.

### **2.5.5 The current climate in clinical psychology**

The diversity of clinical psychology as a profession is important as it ensures services that reflect client's cultures and backgrounds. This also allows choice but it seems that clinical psychologists generally do not reflect the population that they are serving. Despite various attempts, there has been insufficient progress made in this area (Turpin and Coleman, 2010). According to Daiches (2010) clinical psychology shows an apparent unwillingness as a profession to challenge personal assumptions and prejudices, which can lead to an attempt to be politically correct. This can be seen in the experiences of trainees from BME backgrounds (e.g. Shah, 2010).

The profession outwardly attempts to promote diversity but this is not found to be the case upon entering training (Daiches, 2005), perhaps partly because action plans devised by the British Psychological Society (BPS) have not been monitored (Turpin and Coleman, 2010). Eurocentric models are widely used in training and these often fail to address stereotypes and assumptions before silencing them (Daiches, 2005). Some progress has been made in teaching diversity to trainees with the development of teaching material (Patel, Bennett, Dennis, Dosanjh, Mahtani,



Miller and Nadirshaw, 2000) but it seems that there is a large amount of knowledge available that is not being acted upon. Clinical skills also need to be acquired in order to achieve culturally competent practitioners and this is perhaps not occurring due to clinical psychology as a profession being defensive in regards to issues of culture and diversity and the impact of racism. Also, some trainees may see little relevance in diversity training (Coleman and Hussain, in preparation cited in Turpin and Coleman, 2010). This has led to many qualified clinical psychologists not being culturally competent. Those who can teach and discuss issues of diversity are prescribed. This is perhaps a stance that ensures we leave all the discussion on culture and diversity to those from minority groups, giving the impression that it is the role of others to address this (Daiches, 2005).

## **2.6 PROCESSES INVOLVED WHEN TWO CULTURES COLLIDE**

### **2.6.1 Acculturation**

It is useful here to consider the idea of acculturation and how theories around the phenomenon can aid us to understand the experiences of trainees from a MWE background. Acculturation is defined by Berry (1997) as the cultural changes that occur when one has to adapt to a different culture other than their culture of origin. Berry (1997) associates this definition purely with those who have migrated. It is my belief that the ideas presented here can be applied to those of mixed origin who are not of the culture of the majority group seen in clinical psychology training.

Generally within the literature there are two models related to acculturation, one being that an individual strengthens their new identity in the new culture they find themselves in and so weakens their original one. This idea has also come to known as 'the melting pot' (Frable, 1997). The second model is one that is two-dimensional and states that one can retain their original culture and access the new culture simultaneously (LaFromboise, Coleman, Gerton, 1993).

These two processes may also occur in clinical training when those that are not familiar with the culture of training are exposed to it, especially those from minority backgrounds. These processes are those that perhaps need to be paid more attention to, as many trainees who are different to the majority experience the 'melting pot' phenomena (Tan and Campion, 2007). The theory behind the idea of the melting pot is termed as the fusion model and states that cultures

who share economic, political or geographic space will fuse together until they are indistinguishable (LaFromboise et al, 1993). This seems to have occurred with those who have white skin where there is the view that those who are from white backgrounds have no culture (Nolte, 2007).

Berry (1997) discusses the variability in the long term consequences of acculturation. These are dependent on social and personal variables. Acculturation can be reactive, where resistance to change is seen, creative, where new cultures are created, or delayed, where changes do not appear straight away. All of these involve a degree of adaption and differing levels of difficulty.

There are four acculturation strategies that have been identified by Berry (1997) that may aid the understanding of how trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background deal with contact with the dominant group in training. Assimilation is a strategy where the group that is not dominant decides not to maintain their culture of origin, which leads to absorption. Separation occurs when the non-dominant group avoids interaction with the dominant one and chooses to hold firm to their culture. Marginalization is the phenomenon that is seen when there is exclusion and discrimination and so the non-dominant group does not have the possibility or interest of maintaining a relationship with the dominant one but their culture is often lost due to enforcement. When the non-dominant group does not have a choice in their strategy of acculturation the idea of separation then becomes segregation.

A further acculturation strategy is that of integration which can only be successful when sought by both the non-dominant and dominant group and it is accepted that all groups have the right to live as culturally different people. The non-dominant group has to adopt some of the cultural practices of the dominant society and the dominant must be prepared to adapt its institutions, so that all of the group's needs are met. This is perhaps why the needs of minority groups in clinical psychology training are not being met, as institutions seem unwilling, or as yet unable, to adapt to the needs of the minority trainee. For integration to occur there must also be positive mutual attitudes between groups (Kalin and Berry, in press cited in Berry, 1997).

Adaption is key to achieving acculturation and describes the changes initiated in order to meet environmental demands (Berry, 1997). Adaption to a new culture can range from changing ones appearance to altering ones value system. It is usually accompanied by 'cultural shredding', learning and conflict (Berry, 1997). Conflict is usually dealt with by submitting to the dominant

cultures demands. Greater levels of stress can cause marginalization or separation and individuals attempt to deal with experiences by trying to instigate change through problem solving or attempting to regulate the emotions (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984 cited in Berry, 1997) as well as avoid (Endler and Parker, 1990 cited in Berry, 1997).

Problem solving can be seen as an active coping style, whereas a passive coping style incorporates self modification and patience. There are likely to be cross-cultural variations to these coping styles (Diaz-Guerrero, 1979 cited in Berry, 1997) but both styles are likely to have limited success if the dominant group do not accept the strategies leading to exclusion and domination. Those from a MWE background may adopt differing coping styles in order to aid them deal with the dominant culture in training. Good psychological adaption is mediated by social support and is predicted by attitudes of minority and dominant groups (Berry, 1997).

The research literature suggests that differences between cultures have an impact on adaption, with greater cultural differences leading to poorer adaption, as there will be an increased need for 'cultural shredding' and learning (Berry, 1997). The experience of prejudice and discrimination will obviously have a significant negative effect on a person's psychological well-being and their adaption.

### **2.6.2 Bicultural identity**

I will now discuss theory and research regarding bicultural individuals. A discussion of multi-ethnic individuals will follow, as those from MWE backgrounds can fall into both categories. This is because 'bicultural' can refer to negotiating two cultures and 'multi-ethnic' to several cultures. Unlike those who are acculturated, bicultural individuals identify with two cultures and integrate and participate in both.

The way in which identities of different ethnic groups function can be similar but the structure of these identities are thought to be different (Frable, 1997) leading to differing explanatory models of ethnic groups identity formation. There are two major models that discuss how two cultures can be integrated in identity (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009). I will first discuss LaFromboise et al (1993) bicultural competence model.

LaFromboise et al, (1993) suggests that when people move between two cultural groups, these are seen and defined differently; the identity and behaviours associated with each are used in the appropriate context. If an individual has a well integrated sense of self and cultural identity then negotiating two cultures will not have adverse effects. There are six factors that are important when negotiating two different cultures (LaFromboise et al, 1993). One of these is knowledge of cultural beliefs and values, where an individual is aware of the practices and history of a culture. This position also requires an acceptance of the cultures world view and the ability to interact within the rules imposed by this cultures system. In order to reach cultural competence one also needs to hold positive attitudes towards both groups that one is attempting to function in. An individual also needs a belief that they can function effectively in both cultures without compromising their own sense of cultural identity. An ability to communicate and behave appropriately is important and requires a range of appropriate behaviours. Groundedness is required, allowing external support systems to be held in both cultures and the importance of this in developing bicultural identity has been found (Samuels, 2010).

An alternative model states that an individual develops a new identity when interacting with two cultures that combines both (Birman, 1994 cited in Stroink & Lalonde, 2009). Both models have support from the research literature (e.g. Cheng et al, 2006 cited in Stroink & Lalonde, 2009).

DuBois (1961 cited in Abu-Rayya, 2006) describes the phenomenon of ‘double-consciousness’ which is an awareness that bicultural individuals possess of being part of a group, but at the same time different. This can lead to a position of ambivalence over one’s identity (Abu-Rayya, 2006) and internal conflict. Even so, bicultural individuals are in a unique position where they hold different identities and can navigate these different cultural frameworks (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009), highlighting cultural competence. This could be a key strength for trainees from a MWE that could be called upon in clinical and cross-cultural work.

Other strengths ascribed to those who are bicultural are flexibility and chameleon like qualities (Sadao, 2003). They have also shown flexibility in cultural identities and knowledge, which are called upon in different situations (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, Morris, 2002). A review of the literature shows that those studies claiming that bicultural individuals experience negative factors were usually a product of methodological issues (Shih and Sanchez, 2005 cited in Dixon-Peters, 2010).

### **2.6.3 Multi-ethnic identity**

I will now turn to research focusing on multi-ethnic individuals. There is limited research in this area, perhaps due to the high levels of variations seen within multi-ethnic individuals making them difficult to define (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). Also, those who belong to this group may categorize themselves as belonging to only one ethnic group (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999) and may also hide their difference due to past experiences of not being understood (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). This is synonymous with the difficulties seen in attempting to identify the presence of MWE group in society and in clinical training.

There have been a number of identity development models that focus on mixed ethnicity students. These stress the importance of these individuals' experiences when dealing with institutions favouring structures for those who do not need to deal with incorporating differing cultural identities. These experiences can play a role in identity development. A limitation of such theories is that the difference between multi-racial and multi-ethnic groups are usually not distinguished and both groups are often examined as one (Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008).

I will briefly explore two of these models but, as with much of the literature, those from a white background have not been focused upon. Roots (1990 cited in Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008) model states that the experience of mixed ethnicity individuals be viewed through four patterns of crossing social and cultural contexts. These are described as being part of differing cultural groups simultaneously, drawing from an array of tools from different ethnicities and cultures depending on the situation, taking a position of being neither in nor out of any group but identifying as multiracial, and creating a stable base in one culture from which to explore others (Roots, 1996 cited in Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008). This model has found support in the literature (e.g. Rocha, 2010).

Renn (2004 cited in Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008) added an additional pattern to this model, which refers to those that refuse to conform and identify with racial categories. It is worth noting here that these models have been developed in America, as is the case with much of the literature described thus far.

As with bicultural individuals, multi-ethnic individuals have been found to have a broad way of relating to people and flexibility (Ramirez, 1984 cited in Vivero and Jenkins, 1999) as well as less ethnocentric attitudes (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999) and cross-cultural adaption skills (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). All of these strengths may bring a unique position to training as a clinical psychologist but may also bring difficulties. These may include dealing with the assumptions of others based on appearance as well as feeling a need to change due to not gaining full acceptance in the institutions they are part of (Nishimura, 1998 cited in Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008). These individuals may need to develop more complex ways of understanding, learning and being due to needing to manage different cultures. These individuals can struggle to negotiate their multiple identities (Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008). Much research in this area has been carried out on the student population and so this struggle may subside with life experience. Again, studies also do not look at mixed individuals from a white background.

It is thought that the experiences of women who are multiethnic may differ to those of men as they occupy two or more minority groups in society (Dixon-Peters, 2010). Sophisticated knowledge is required when attempting to understand these individuals as they may occupy a marginalized group in relation to their families, feeling cut off from any or all of their cultural groups (Samuels, 2010).

#### **2.6.4 Cultural homelessness**

Here I will discuss an idea that is likely to have an impact on the way those from a MWE background experience their training. Cultural homelessness refers to the experience of belonging to more than one culture where switching between cultures causes confusion, both emotionally and socially (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). This position could lead to an individual from a mixed background feeling blame and shame for not belonging. Support for cultural homelessness has been found in other research (e.g. Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004).

Multi-ethnic people can be part of differing cultures with conflicting rules and are less likely to feel they have a place to belong. These individuals may lack a cultural home, which Vivero and Jenkins (1999) define as being very much connected to one's emotional wellbeing and includes feelings of belonging to a group that one can identify with and form attachments. This gives members clear rules on who are group members and who is defined as the out group, leading to less confusion around where one fits (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999).

Those from mixed ethnicities are in a unique position of being a minority on multiple levels (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). Those from a MWE background are in a further unique position of being a minority and part of the majority by way of their appearance and skin colour. This could lead to these individuals feeling rejected by both the minority and majority groups, which is likely to impact upon their training experience. The experiencing of not belonging can be painful leading to effort spent on fitting in with a specific ethnic group. In the case of MWE individuals, this may be the majority, dominant white group so that a sense of belonging and success can be gained. This may be particularly pertinent for trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background whom already have pressure placed on them to fit the norm of what a clinical psychologist ought to be. Those from mixed backgrounds may experience confusion and isolation without full acceptance and may have low self-esteem, hiding their emotions (Hershel, 1995 cited in Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). They may isolate themselves as a form of avoidance (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999).

In contrast with Vivero and Jenkins (1999) idea of cultural homelessness, Rocha (2010) found that those from mixed ethnic backgrounds had a strong sense of belonging to both of their cultural groups. Participants also described belonging to many different communities, having multiple homes, and having the ability to choose where they belong.

Those from mixed ethnic backgrounds described being more sensitive to the experiences of others and felt that many forms of identity were important to them. They placed particular importance on their nationality and the place where they were born. Several participants described connections with both of their cultures and that their ethnic identities changed over time. They felt it was important to understand their personal heritage as multiethnic individuals; training might be a place where this can occur (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004).

## **2.7 RACE**

### **2.7.1 The importance of appearance**

The appearance of an individual plays a significant role in how one will be identified and treated by others. It can also determine how an individual identifies themselves (Verkuyten and de Wolf, 2002), especially if from a mixed background (Dixon-Peters, 2010). There is no doubt that those

from a MWE who appear as one of the white majority will find that their skin colour will significantly impact upon the way in which they are treated. In relation to training, MWE trainees may find that their invisible difference and ability to pass as one of the majority will have an impact on how they are treated by the majority group. This may be a different experience to those who belong to a race that is non-white. The way in which the dominant group identify with multiracial people is associated with appearance. If mixed ethnic individuals can pass as one of the majority then they are more likely to be treated and seen as someone who is only of one ethnicity (Dixon-Peters, 2010).

Race is an issue that cannot be ignored as it is a category that is used in society to generate difference and dominance. It is used to maintain positions in society that are justified by the idea that different races have very different natures, as appearance is used to indicate underlying ways of being. White people seem exempt from this. Race is a category that only finds meaning in interactions with others and so without others imposing it, it would not exist (West and Fenstermaker, 1995). With the significant impact of racial identity it is perhaps time that we paid more attention to this on clinical psychology training. In order to make the invisible visible, we as a profession need to stop seeing white culture as a melting pot and begin to distinguish, which this research aims to do.

### **2.7.2 White racial identity development**

It is important here to provide space to discuss white identity and how the development of this can impact on how one thinks about issues of difference and diversity. There are two main models that are used to describe white individuals' relationship to their race and that of others put forward by Helms (1990 cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007) and Rowe et al, (1994 cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007).

Helm's (1990, cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007) states that there are six statuses that show different attitudes, beliefs and behaviours in relation to race. These statuses are interactive and can be adopted at different times simultaneously (Helms, 1995 cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007). A healthy identity is formed when white individuals are aware of their conscious and unconscious racist attitudes. The least advanced status is termed as contact, where individuals are unaware of racism in society and the role it serves. The next is disintegration, where awareness is beginning to emerge of one's membership to the dominant group and may be



accompanied by confusion and guilt. The reintegration status can lead to resolving these issues by distancing from non-white racial groups and idolizing ones own groups values. Evidence that supports this idolizing is recognized and that which does not is ignored. Pseudo-independence is the status where one begins to acknowledge their contribution to the existence of racism but may still hold intolerance for other groups. Immersion/emersion is one where attempts to seek a position where white skin colour is not associated with racism is made and action begins to be taken against racism. The final status described is autonomy where a racial identity is held that sees the value of differing cultural perspectives and attempts to tackle social inequalities. In this status one also wishes to give up privileges as a member of the dominant group.

The way that white trainees view their racial identity will play a key role in how they deal with issues of difference and diversity on training and in their professional lives and is perhaps an aspect that should be attended to on training, especially in relation to aiding people to move towards a more autonomous status, as described by Helm (1990 cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007).

It has been found that trainee clinical and counselling psychologists that have an awareness of racism have a more integrated identity status and so less colour blind attitudes are adopted; the attitude that race does not matter and should be ignored (Gushue & Constantine, 2007). Those from a MWE background may have a less integrated racial identity, as perhaps do dominant trainees that are not forced to think about their race in their profession as they are able to ignore, passing as the majority.

Frankenberg (1993, cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007) states that those who hold colour blind attitudes focus on similarities between individuals, which could be an occurrence on training courses that teach trainees to fit a mould. This can lead to colour blindness towards those who are white; white is not a colour and so everyone is the same (Nolte, 2007). It seems this should be challenged before we can begin to see the differences in those who are from a MWE background.

### **2.7.3 White privilege**

An added dimension to the difficulties that may be experienced by MWE individuals is white privilege. Possessing a skin colour that is white or light is associated with more privilege and

desirability in many cultures (Dixon-Peters, 2010) and those from a mixed ethnic background have described being part of the dominant, oppressive group and as well as the oppressed. These individuals have described attempting to find ways of moving beyond this by redefining themselves but also forgive themselves (Rocha, 2010). White privilege could add to the self-blame and shame that they may feel as part of not belonging to any one culture (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999).

The fact that those from a MWE background possess membership of the dominant group through their skin colour cannot be ignored and in turn neither can the white privilege that comes with this position, which will make their experiences on training very different to those who are not visibly part of the majority.

White privilege is denied and protected by many, as privileges obtained but not earned for possessing white skin are ignored. McIntosh (1988) discusses white as often taught as the norm and everyone else is the other. White privilege is avoided so that we are able to maintain the idea that society is built on progression through merit, which has been found with trainee counselling psychologists (Ancis and Szymanski, 2001). It is difficult to acknowledge that white skin colour is an asset to the individuals that possess it and that it aids to open doors in life as well as aids us to ignore anything that is not part of the dominant culture (McIntosh, 1988). Many white individuals believe that they are free from race and so can ignore racism because, as previously described, white is seen as not being a race. Many do not see themselves as racists because racism is taught as involving individual acts not institutions and invisible systems (McIntosh, 1988).

Much of the discussions in psychology about race and culture are instigated by minority groups and so the risk taking has been left to these individuals (Nolte, 2007). This could be the case for those from a MWE background where membership to the majority may cause risk aversion. On the other hand dual membership to a minority group may spur risk taking, as those who identify with the oppressed often attempt to make changes as they are likely to benefit them far more than the dominant group (Miller, 2002).

White individuals can feel ashamed, guilty and uncomfortable regarding their white privilege, which may explain the reluctance to discuss race and culture. The beliefs of the dominant group in training go unchallenged due to the lack of diversity in the training environment (Ancis and

Szymanski, 2001). One way to stop this is to begin to look at white as having a culture that is rich with differences (Nolte, 2007) and focus on trainees' differences rather than producing a profession of psychologists that are the same.

## **2.8 EXPERIENCES OF TRAINEE THERAPISTS AND PSYCHOLOGISTS**

### **2.8.1 Identity change during training**

Discussions around trainees' experiences of training often show changes that occur in identity. Tan and Campion (2007) have discussed their experiences as clinical psychology trainees, highlighting the culture of training and the implicit and explicit expectations around trainees' behaviour. This included the language one should use and the way one should present leading to incongruence in feelings and actions. It seems that training can produce a split between the personal and professional self that trainees from a MWE background might be well placed to cope with. Focus shifts from judging to understanding demonstrating the challenges and conflicts that training presents to one's sense of identity and the importance of addressing these losses and gains.

Nel (2006) also found identity changes and re-evaluation of self took place during family therapy training. As with Tan and Campion (2007), trainees' identities were undermined and relationships renegotiated due to the demands of course. These experiences seem to link to the theory, explored above, on acculturation and the processes involved. It seems that training requires a form of acculturation that can result in the 'melting pot' phenomena or individuals can emerge with their original culture intact while also taking on the new one (Frale, 1997). The description of changes put forward by these trainees leads to questioning whether clinical psychology should be treated as a separate culture; all who do not fit the dominant group in this culture need to acculturate.

### **2.8.2 Supervision in training**

The role of supervision in providing support for trainees is key and clinical psychology trainees use supervisors and staff to aid training (Fleming and Steen, 2004). Even so, if trainees are not trained to address issues such as ethnicity and culture and to see these issues as important supervisors may have little effect (Ladany, Inman, Constantine and Hofheinz, 1997).

It is a consistent experience of tutors and trainees in family therapy training that there is a lack of time to explore personal relationships to cultural aspects in enough detail to produce confidence in the area (Divac and Heaphy, 2005). If time is not being appropriately allocated to these issues on training then it is unlikely that time will be allocated else where.

Clinical psychology as a profession has been slow at beginning to discuss supervision and produce guidelines (Fleming and Green, 2007). Supervisors are responsible for fostering trainees' clinical competence in working with clients from minority groups but they continue to use models without considering how these sit with those who are not part of the dominant white majority (Constantine and Sue, 2007). If supervisors have not addressed their own biases they could collude with supervisees attempts not to address theirs (Constantine and Sue, 2007), leading to cultural mistrust in the supervisory relationship (Terrell and Terrell, 1984 cited in Constantine and Sue, 2007).

Avoiding cultural issues in supervision could have detrimental effects on clients as supervisees may feel that if these issues are not important in supervision then are also unimportant in clinical work (Constantine and Sue, 2007). Regardless of ethnic background, if trainees engage in supervision that examines multicultural issues they feel supported and have increased sensitivity (Burkard et al, 2006 cited in Constantine and Sue, 2007). White supervisors also need to be aware of their white privilege in order to aid the prevention of invalidating cultural issues, stereotyping, blaming clients for problems stemming from oppression and offering culturally insensitive treatment recommendation (Constantine and Sue, 2007).

In their experiences of training, Adetimole, Afuape and Vara, (2005) found that few of their supervisors were able to reflect on issues of power and difference within the relationship and clinical work. Supervisors need to be equipped to take initiative in addressing issues (Rajan and Shaw, 2008) and without their guidance all trainees, not only those from MWE, will be left alone to deal with issues such as discrimination in relation to clients and work colleagues, and the cycle of cultural incompetence will continue.

### **2.8.3 The experiences of BME trainee clinical psychologists**

It is hoped that in examining the experiences of those from a BME background we may also be able to draw some tentative comparisons with those from a MWE background. As mentioned previously, the experiences of these groups will be different due to appearance of difference but, in the absence of literature on those from a more invisible difference, this literature may aid some understanding into the experiences of MWE individuals.

Black psychologists have spoken about their experiences training as clinical psychologists and some have highlighted the anxieties, feelings of guilt, anger and suspiciousness that others exhibited towards them on training. Training has been found to compromise the identities of those from BME groups through pressure to embrace the dominant group's values. Lack of support has also been shown and assumptions that black trainees had achieved their position due to luck and being an ethnic minority (Adetimole et al, 2005). Peers have been said to make racist comments and challenging underlying prejudice meant risking exclusion and being seen in a negative light (Adetimole et al, 2005). Questions of whether those from BME groups can find belonging in clinical psychology without compromising identity have been raised (Adetimole et al, 2005). Black trainees have also experienced being viewed as only competent at issues of race (Adetimole et al, 2005), which further highlights the importance of race in how others respond to individuals.

Diversity and culture has been experienced as difficult to address in training and assumptions unchallenged creating uncertainty about challenging the dominant discourse (Rajan and Shaw, 2008). Those from BME groups have feared standing out if resisting or critiquing the dominant ideologies and learning needs have not being met or acknowledged (Rajan and Shaw, 2008). Integrating into the dominate culture left worries of betraying roots and a need to sacrifice and conceal cultural and ethnic identity (Rajan and Shaw, 2008). Issues of racism in client work and the impact of personal discussions about race, culture and diversity had not been thought about by those involved in training (Rajan and Shaw, 2008).

On the other hand it has been found that some trainees from BME backgrounds felt that training had enabled them to achieve a greater sense of personal and professional integration learning to put their two identities together (Rajan and Shaw, 2008) and some felt accepted and reported positive experiences (Shah, 2010).

The most recent study on the experiences of trainees from a BME background has been conducted by Shah (2010). Several themes emerged from this study, one of which highlighted BME trainees feeling that they stood out as being different. This may be experienced differently for those from a MWE background, as this group's difference may be invisible; some may be in a position to hide their difference if they so wish. Several participants felt that they often encountered resistance when trying to address issues of race and culture and that different aspects of their culture was highlighted depending on context (Shah, 2010).

Some of the participants in Shah's (2010) study reported feeling isolated and disconnected while trying to fit with the course's view of how psychologists should be. They were often invited to discuss issues of race and ethnicity from an expert position. They used their bicultural identities to aid them in client work, which may be the case with those from a MWE. Some supervisors discussed issues of race and culture whereas others avoided having these discussions. A need for safety prior to addressing these issues was found. Shah (2010) recommends that future research conduct similar studies examining other diverse groups who experience difference.

## **2.9 CONCLUSIONS AND RATIONALE**

Previous research has shown that there are an increasing number of people who have a difference that is invisible or incongruent with the way they appear. These individuals may belong to a race or culture that is unidentifiable through their appearance. Of the research that had been undertaken on those from a mixed background, the focus has been on those who have a race other than white (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004) and this is an issue that is rarely discussed on clinical psychology training.

The current research will examine how trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background deal with issues of difference as they arise on training. The role of supervisors in aiding to develop competency has gone unexamined in this group of trainees and so this will also be the focus of the current research.

Training is a stressful experience and leads to much change and possible restructuring of one's identity (Tan and Campion, 2007). The difficulties that trainees experience in clinical training

have been shown to increase both in severity and prevalence (Kuyken, Peters, Power and Lavender, 2003). Trainees often appear to be coping but problems are usually internalized and so are not easily identifiable. Even so, findings on this aspect are moderate and so there is uncertainty regarding a causal association as yet (Kuyken et al, 2003). Never the less, this internalization and appearance of coping may be an aspect that is pertinent to those from a mixed background who straddle two cultures, as past research has shown a tendency to internalize and experience low self-esteem and self blame (Hershel, 1995 cited in Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). Also, training producing trainees that are expected to fit a standard mould (Tan and Champion, 2007) may impact on the interactions of those from a MWE background who are both part of a majority and minority group and the part of their identity they chose to identify with. Having membership of both groups may lead MWE trainees, in such an environment as training, not to disclose their difference since it is not necessarily visible (Dixon-Peters, 2010).

Models of acculturation show the different ways in which those who enter a culture that is not their own adapt (Berry, 1997). These ways of adapting may be applicable to understanding how MWE individuals adapt to the culture of training and whether they lose themselves in the majority while attempting to deal with possible conflicts of their own multiple cultures and that of training. This will no doubt be impacted by the white privilege that trainees from a MWE background experience and responses of others will be mediated by their appearance and difference being unidentifiable.

Research on multiracial individuals also show the many positive attributes these individuals bring, such as flexibility (Ramirez, 1984 cited in Vivero and Jenkins, 1999), which can be applied to clinical training. MWE individuals' positive attributes may go unrecognized, as does their difference and so not aided to develop and grow since their difference may be seen as part of the 'melting pot' of white clinical psychology trainees.

It is concluded that their needs to be an exploration into the experiences of trainees from a MWE background so that the way in which they deal with issues of difference can be explored, the way in which they interact with peers, staff and supervisors in relation to their difference examined and the support they receive or need uncovered. It will also be useful to explore the way in which these trainees approach coursework given their flexibility as multi-ethnic individuals and experiences of different cultures.

## **2.10 AIMS OF RESEARCH**

In accordance with the literature reviewed and ideas outlined in this chapter, the current study will examine the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. This research is timely as there is little, if any, research on this group of individuals and the little research that there is comes from America. The research examining the experiences of mixed ethnic individuals does not focus on those from MWE backgrounds.

The current research aims to build upon Shah's (2010) findings, to explore the training experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. This is in line with Shah's (2010) recommendations that more research is needed focusing on minority groups in clinical psychology training.

It is hoped that this research will aid trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background to make sense of their experiences in the possible absence of acknowledgement of their existence as a group of individuals who bring a unique position to training. It is also hoped that the research will highlight this group of trainees to training courses and explore the support that they may need during completion of clinical psychology training.



### **3. RESEARCH QUESTION**

In line with the aims of this study the main research question was framed as:-

- How do trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background experience being part of a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology training course?

The following areas of interest were also explored:-

- How does this group experience:
  - The therapeutic relationship
  - Interaction with peers
  - Teaching sessions and other academic forums where diversity issues arise/are discussed
  - Interactions with staff and supervisors
  - Completing work to be submitted as part of course requirements.
- How do these trainees deal with issues that might arise in relation to difference?
- How do trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background view their identity and has this changed during the time they have been enrolled on the Doctorate in Clinical Psychology training course?
- How do courses meet the potential needs of this group of trainees?

## **4. METHOD**

The following section will outline the methodology used in this research and the rationale for this. It will also provide information regarding participant recruitment, analysis and steps taken to ensure quality.

### **4.1 A QUALITATIVE APPROACH**

This research employs a qualitative research design. As stated in the previous section, there has been no research conducted into examining the experience of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. As such, the qualities of a qualitative methodology lend itself to the detailed exploration of this topic. Qualitative methodology is concerned with the experiences of the individual as they live through them (Elliott et al, 1999) and importance is given to the interaction between researcher and participant. Qualitative studies emphasise the participant's uniqueness and context and takes the position of multiple truths and co-constructed meanings (Yardley, 2000). As is typical in qualitative research, this study will attempt to understand the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background from their own perspective (Elliot et al, 1999).

#### **4.1.1 Choosing Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)**

I have chosen IPA in an attempt to answer my research question as it gives a detailed exploration of the individual experiences of a small group of participants while refraining from making general claims. Freedom to explore experiences without the constraint of being limited to existing knowledge and theory is also allowed for and IPA provides coherent guidelines for the novice researcher (Smith, Flowers and Larkin, 2009). This corresponds with the aim of the current research, which is to explore the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. I acknowledge that there are many equally viable qualitative research methodologies but find that IPA fits with my position on social constructionism, as it aligns itself with social constructionism but not in the more extreme forms as perhaps other methodologies, such as Discourse analysis. I acknowledge, as with IPA, that people exist in a social context but also function as individuals outside of this. I am drawn to IPA due to its focus of the interpretation of meaning in relation to context and the idiosyncratic nature of the analysis. I also value its focus on both divergence and convergence (Smith et al, 2009), capturing common

features of experience as well as those specific to particular individuals (Starks & Trinidad, 2007).

I am aware that this research could have lent itself to a narrative methodology and in fact IPA is said to have connections with this model through its concern with the construction of meaning (Smith et al, 2009). I decided against a narrative approach due to being a novice qualitative researcher and feeling uncertain about this approach, as teaching and supervision was less widely available than with IPA. IPA has also made a firm contribution to literature in clinical psychology and is widely used in clinical psychology training (Thompson, Larkin and Smith, 2011). It is said to be congruent with the types of questions that are now being asked in clinical psychology (Thompson et al, 2011).

#### **4.1.2 The theory underpinning IPA**

IPA was first devised by Smith (1996) who aimed to present a qualitative approach that was born out of psychology and emphasised the role of the experiential. It focuses on exploring how individuals experience their world and give meaning to it (Thompson et al, 2011). It is phenomenological as it approaches experiences in a manner that, while acknowledging assumptions and predictions researchers naturally make, explores them in their own right without trying to pre-empt and categorise outcomes (Smith et al, 2009).

IPA is informed by hermeneutics, the theory of interpretation, and states that the researcher is involved in a double hermeneutic as they explore and interpret participants attempts at making sense of their experience. This allows the researcher to make sense of the participant's sense making process. IPA holds to the importance of the hermeneutic circle (Smith et al, 2009), which highlights the interlinking between experiences as a whole and also their parts; these cannot be separated from one another. This idea is particularly relevant in the analysis stage of IPA, where focus is placed on the non-linear nature of the process, as it moves between the sentence, the complete text and the single word; meaning is only clear in the context of the relationship between the whole and the parts and analysis is a dynamic process. As well as using the circle to think about the data that emerges, it can be used to think about the impact of the researcher on the data and in turn the data on the researcher (Smith et al, 2009).

IPA is also idiographic as it focuses on the specifics of a particular individuals' experience and their context rather than focusing on groups, patterns and theories. This is what makes it research that aims to stay close to the experience (Smith et al, 2009). This must be attempted prior to then moving to a position where divergence and convergence between participants' experiences are explored. This is where there can be a move towards the more general (Willig, 2005).

#### **4.1.3 Limitations of IPA**

Criticisms of IPA come in its focus on language as a lens from which to view participants' experiences. The use of transcripts to determine participants experience has been said to highlight that which is taking place in the room between the researcher and the participant rather than the participants experience outside of the interview (Willig, 2005). Even so, others argue that an interview does provide a window to a persons experience outside of the room (Miller & Glassner, 2004) and so supports the idea that we can access experience through language and description.

A further criticism of IPA is that it ignores why an experience occurs and so does not try to explain where experiences derive from (Willig, 2005). O'Conner and Hallem, (2000 cited in Willig, 2005) question the underpinnings of IPA as being phenomenological. They cite Smith's (1996) own work as stating that IPA is concerned with thoughts and beliefs when true phenomenology should be concerned with accessing experience through other means such as, emotions and accessing aspects that are more unconscious. Even so, no methodology is without its critiques and I believe that despite these criticisms IPA is appropriate for this research due to its ability to aid the detailed examination of the experiences of individuals, capturing the richness of experience as well as providing a framework to explore divergence and convergence between individuals within a group.

### **4.2 PARTICIPANTS**

#### **4.2.1 Recruitment**

A purposive sample was recruited from several clinical psychology training courses in the U.K. For confidentiality reasons, participants were not recruited from the University of Hertfordshire.

Recruitment was undertaken by sending an initial email to all course administrators in the UK. These were then forwarded to all course directors (See Appendix 2). The email explained the nature of the project, the inclusion and exclusion criteria and requested permission for a further email to be disseminated to all of the trainees currently on their training course. It also explained that participant's identity would remain confidential and that course staff would not know who has agreed to participate in the research. This confidentiality was only to be broken in line with the BPS (2009) code of conduct. This states, for example, that confidentiality can be broken if a participant discloses serious harm to self or others. Two training courses responded to my request with a reply stating that they did not have any current trainees meeting my criteria.

For those training programmes where course directors were in agreement, an email was sent (See Appendix 3) to course administrators to be forwarded to all current trainees. This email had an information pack attached (See Appendix 4) and my contact details were included so that potential participants could contact me directly.

Participants were recruited in order of initial contact and, once contact had been made, I arranged a telephone appointment to complete the initial screening form (See Appendix 5). This was done to ascertain whether potential participants met the inclusion criteria.

Participants were then asked if they had any questions about the research and participation and, if inclusion criteria were met, they were asked if they wished to proceed with participation. They were informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time and were not required to participate. If participants verbally consented to participation, an appropriate time and place was arranged in order to conduct the interview. Prior to interviews taking place, all participants were asked if they still wished to take part in the research and if they had any further questions. If they wished to be involved, they were asked to give informed, written consent and were given a hard copy of the information pack and their signed consent form (See Appendix 6). I informed them that the interview would be audio recorded and that both I and my research supervisors may have access to the anonymised transcripts of their interview. Participants were informed that all transcripts would be anonymised with names omitted from all records and replaced with an alias and that there would be an opportunity to debrief at the end of the interview which could be discontinued or stopped any time point. Once the interview was complete a hard copy of the debrief sheet (See Appendix 7) was given to participants and went through and any further questions were addressed.

#### **4.2.2 Inclusion criteria**

IPA's requirement for a homogenous sample (Smith et al, 2009) was complied with as far as possible by recruiting current trainee clinical psychologists that were undertaking the doctorate in the U.K and identified themselves as being from a White Other or Mixed White ethnic background on the ethnicity screening form. Participants were also asked the ethnic origin of their parents, as the research required at least one parent to be born outside of the U.K. There was no disability, gender, religion or sexual orientation restrictions on participants as Doctorate in Clinical Psychology courses in the U.K do not impose such restrictions. However, participants were over 21 years of age due to the minimum requirements for entry into a doctorate program being to have obtained an undergraduate degree.

#### **4.2.3 Exclusion Criteria**

Due to the research question examining the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background, those who identified their ethnic origin as other than Mixed White or White Other on the screening form were not included in the study.

#### **4.2.4 The sample**

Participants comprised of 8 current trainee clinical psychologists who identified themselves as being from a mixed white or white other ethnic background. All participants were female and ages ranged from 24 to 34 years of age. Please see Table 1 for additional demographic information.

<b>Participant Pseudonym</b>	<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Place of birth</b>	<b>Year of training</b>
<b>Participant 1 (Isis)</b>	White British and African	UK	1st
<b>Participant 2 (Sara)</b>	Mixed White Asian	Outside UK	2nd
<b>Participant 3 (Alexandra)</b>	Other White: Cypriot British	UK	2nd
<b>Participant 4 (Izzie)</b>	Other White: White European	Outside UK	2nd
<b>Participant 5 (Anyia)</b>	Other White: White European	Outside UK	1st
<b>Participant 6 (Joanna)</b>	Mixed White European	UK	2nd
<b>Participant 7 (Natalia)</b>	Other Latin American	Outside UK	2nd
<b>Participant 8 (Lisa)</b>	Other White European	Outside UK	2nd

*Table 1: Demographics of participants*

## **4.3 ETHICAL ISSUES**

### **4.3.1 Ethical considerations**

Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Hertfordshire. The documentation to support this can be found in Appendix 8

### **4.3.2 Informed consent**

As stated in the recruitment section, above, full informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their participation in this study.

### **4.3.3 Confidentiality**

Confidentiality was maintained throughout this study, data was anonymised and pseudo names used. Participation in the study was kept confidential and so courses were not informed of whether any of their trainee clinical psychologists had agreed to participate. As the researcher, I am the only individual who is aware of participant's true identity. Participants were informed of confidentiality and its limitations prior to interview via the information pack and verbal explanation. Identifying information has been removed for the purpose of this write-up, which includes specifics of ethnic origin, to avoid participant identification. Identifying information was kept separately and securely at my home address, including transcripts, recordings and other research material. Participants were informed that audio recordings would be destroyed upon my degree being conferred and that anonymised data would be kept according to the University of Hertfordshire's guidelines for good practice; 5 years following the submission of the research.

Participants were aware that my research supervisors and examiners may have access to the anonymised transcripts of their interview. Due to the time constraints, an approved transcription service was used to transcribe half of the interviews, the other half I transcribed personally.

Participants were informed that their interview may be transcribed by an approved transcription services and if this were the case, recordings would be identified by numbers. The transcription service used had their own non-disclosure, confidentiality agreement that all employees sign upon commencing employment.

### **4.3.4 Potential distress**

There was the potential that participants might become distressed upon describing their experiences and also following the interview. Participants were assured throughout the study that they could discontinue at any time point. Time was allocated at the end of each interview to reflect upon the interview and to go through a debrief sheet which included possible contacts if participants felt upset or in need of support during the days following participation in the study (See Appendix 7). This was done with the specific aim of minimising any potential distress. All participants stated that they found the interview an interesting experience and the majority stated that it provided them with a rare opportunity to reflect on their ethnic and cultural identity.



## **4.4 DATA COLLECTION**

### **4.4.1 Semi-structured interviews**

Semi-structured interviews were conducted as a means to gather data. An interview schedule (See Appendix 1) was devised and based upon Shah's (2010) interview schedule who examined the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from BME backgrounds. This was revised with the aid of my research supervisor, who is highly experienced in conducting and supervising IPA studies, relevant literature and IPA guidelines (Smith et al, 2009). During interviewing, the schedule was used flexibly to allow for elaboration on particular issues raised by interviewees and further probing and encouragement of rich descriptive accounts. A pilot interview was also conducted to gain feedback on interview questions and technique, which was modified accordingly.

Participants were given a choice of venue, which included the University of Hertfordshire or another appropriate venue that participants were willing to travel to. Three participants chose for their interview to be conducted at their university and five participants chose to be interviewed at their homes. Interviews lasted between 42 and 105 minutes and were transcribed following recording with identifying information removed or disguised.

## **4.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

Data was analysed using IPA originally developed by Smith (1996; Smith, Jarmen and Osbourne, 1999). During analysis I followed the guidelines stipulated in Smith et al (2009), which outline the stages of analysis involved in IPA and highlight the room and need for flexibility and creativity within this framework.

### **4.5.1 Case by case analysis**

Smith et al (2009) have suggested two possible ways of conducting an IPA analysis, these being either a case by case analysis or using themes from a few individually analysed cases to inform the analysis of the remaining sample. The later is usually used for larger samples over 6

participants. I opted for a case by case analysis as I did not wish to lose the richness and idiosyncrasy of the data. This is not necessarily so if the later mentioned analysis is used but I felt that it would perhaps lead to a loss of detail.

Each interview was analysed in its own right during the initial stages of analysis. This began with several readings of the original transcript and the noting down of any initial thoughts in order to put them to one side and aid the examination of the data with a 'clear mind' (Smith et al, 2009). Transcripts were then directly annotated with notes in the right hand column (See Appendix 9 for sample analysis) with particular focus on aspects of interest or significance. Initial descriptive notes were also made followed by re-reading the transcript to allow for deeper level analysis, where interpretations were made regarding what participants were attempting to communicate and also the use of language was noted.

Following this stage, transcripts were re-read alongside descriptive, linguistic and interpretational comments to aid eliciting emergent themes. These emergent themes were documented in the left-hand column through a process of re-reading and re-naming themes to ensure a balance between specificity and generalisability. This checking also ensured that the themes remained grounded in the text. Words and phrases used by the participants themselves were paid attention to and, as far as possible, used to construct labels for the emerging themes.

The final individual analysis stage involved grouping emergent themes into sub-ordinate themes to facilitate the emergence of super-ordinate themes. This involved placing each emergent theme on a separate piece of paper and visually ascertaining how each might connect or prove to be in opposition. Through this process, emerging themes were condensed into sub-ordinate themes and clustered under super-ordinate themes. Individual transcripts were then re-read and key extracts taken and placed under each theme to ensure they were grounded in the text. A list of sub-ordinate themes was produced and placed under the corresponding super-ordinate theme. Each interview transcript was analysed using the same process until all eight were complete.

#### **4.5.2 Group level analysis**

After all the individual transcripts had been analysed, the super-ordinate and corresponding sub-ordinate themes from all interviews were examined together and refined to produce a list of

overall sub-ordinate themes. Smith et al (2009) discuss the importance of re-occurrence across of themes across interviews and so this was considered when merging all sub-ordinate themes to produce a refined list that represented all eight interviews (See Appendix 12). Following this, a similar process occurred where sub-ordinate themes for individual interviews were being grouped under super-ordinate themes. This involved taking all overall sub-ordinate themes and writing them on individual pieces of paper to see how they could visually be grouped into the overall master list of themes (See Table 2: Master themes). These overall master themes were used as the basis for writing the results section of this study.

#### **4.6 CREDIBILITY**

Elliott et al (1999) discuss the importance of guidelines for qualitative research so that it is seen as legitimate and rigorous. It is also a way of insuring quality control. They point towards the importance of guidelines being flexible, as qualitative research is often a creative process. Smith (2003) states the importance of assessing qualitative research using appropriate criteria. Yardley (2008) discusses the historical application of criteria that are inappropriate, namely objectivity, reliability and generalizability, as these do not pay attention to the influence of researcher. Elliott et al (1999) and Yardley (2000, 2008) have attempted to create appropriate guidelines, which have been given support by Smith et al (2009) and were used as a guide for the quality and validity of this research.

Elliott et al (1999) point towards the importance of being transparent about ones own perspective, which is something that I have addressed with reflective sections throughout the research. I will further reflect on the role my values and assumptions may have played on analysis of results in the discussion section of this research. This will be done due to the view that such disclosure can aid others to understand the research more deeply and make their own judgements regarding the interpretation of the data and other possible interpretations. I will be demonstrating how my themes fit with the data through the use of extracts in the results section of this research, which is in line with Elliott et al, (1999) guidelines.

I have carried out credibility checks through reviewing my data for errors and overstatements and have attempted to present nuances in the data, as is common place in IPA, through presented convergence and divergence within themes. I will discuss possible generalisability as well as limitations in the discussion section as recommended by Elliott et al (1999).

Yardley (2000) proposes criteria and acknowledges that research will vary in the manner in which it fulfils these. I believe this research meets Yardley's (2000) criteria of sensitivity to context as I have a firm awareness and grounding in the context of this research. Yardley (2000) also points to the importance of commitment to the research topic; I have a firm engagement with this topic as I have the experience of being a trainee clinical psychologist from a MWE background.

I have been transparent with my analysis and have made my analysed transcripts available to my research supervisors. Sections of analysis from several interviews were examined by my principle supervisor to assess the validity of the themes elicited and a whole interview, alongside the sub-ordinate and super-ordinate themes elicited, were also examined. My research supervisor agreed that the master and sub-themes at group level analysis could be justified and appeared to be grounded in the text, thus demonstrating credibility and trustworthiness of the data. I have also included an analysed interview in Appendix 9. In undertaking my research and analysis I have utilised the support and knowledge of my peers who were also undertaking IPA studies and the teaching and training offered as part of my Doctorate in Clinical Psychology training course.

Throughout the research process I have kept reflective notes (Smith, 1996), which seemed particularly pertinent as this research is an experience that is close to me personally. These notes were especially in relation to my thoughts, feelings and assumptions following interviewing each individual participant. I also used my peers and research supervisor to reflect on issues raised for me during this research. This will be further considered in the discussion.

## **5. ON BEING THE INTERVIEWER**

### **5.1 Interviewing peers**

Throughout this project, I have recognised the similarities and differences between me and my participants, which have been multilayered. I have ensured my continued awareness of my own pre-conceptions through the use of peers and my research supervisor. This fits with the stance encouraged by IPA, as it is stated that one cannot completely separate the researcher from the material but throughout analysis an attempt is made to bracket existing knowledge and ideas in an effort to stay close to participants experiences (Smith et al, 2009).

I recognize both the advantages and disadvantages of being part of the group that I am interviewing. Interviewees will respond differently to interviewers in terms of aspects such as, gender. Differences can be disadvantageous as can similarities (Miller and Glassner, 2004). Shared group membership can lead to a worry in interviewees of being judged or of misconceptions but can also aid to decrease social distances and ensure questions asked are understandable and relevant. Also, I believe that my participation in two different cultures has aided me to understand the narratives shared by interviewees (Richardson, 1990 cited in Miller and Glassner, 2004). Underlying all of this is the importance of trying my best to understand the stories I am being told and to re-tell them in a way that aids to inform others of the experiences of my participants (Miller and Glassner, 2004).

### **5.2 Reflections on the interviewing process**

It has been highly rewarding to undertake research in an area that is so close to my own life experience but it has also been a challenge. I will discuss these challenges further in the discussion section. One challenge faced when conducting interviews was holding in mind the research question and continually returning to this. This felt difficult due to several participants having a seemingly different agenda to that of the research area. These participants wished to discuss other aspects that were important to them, such as family and class. My shared interests, and at times experiences, in these areas led me to be immersed in the material. Once I realised this was occurring, I ensured that I brought interviewees back to relating their experiences of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds to being a trainee clinical psychologist. This was still a difficult task at times and was not always achieved. I believe that this difficulty

may point towards a lack of space, or 'good enough' space in training to discuss, in a meaningful way, the impact of trainees personal narratives, especially in relation to difference amongst trainees. Also, many participants stated at the end of being interviewed that it is rare they get to think about the impact of their cultural identity on their training.

For one particular participant, the difficulty in facilitating discussion focused on her cultural background was perhaps due to an assumption made about my cultural background prior to the interview taking place. Although Alexandra was not informed of my cultural background, she made the assumption that we have a similar ethnic origin. The full effect of this on the interview process was not explored in detail and so I am unsure as to its impact but it may have silenced some of the stories that she had to tell. I wonder if her difficulty in discussing her background was a continuation from her experiences with family and peers, where many issues went unsaid.

Another interesting occurrence noted during interviews was the seeming unwillingness for interviewees to be direct and explicit when they were referring to course staff or peers. At times it was obvious that peers were being referred to but it was very rare that a participant would explicitly name this. I am aware that one participant was openly worried about confidentiality and being identified by others. I wonder if there was also an underlying wish for most participants not to be seen to 'bad mouth' members of their course. Statements made that were more negative about course members were often quickly followed by neutralizing statements. This may have been due to not wishing to appear disloyal or too different, especially since several participants placed much value upon 'fitting in.' As I am a trainee clinical psychologist, participants may have been worried about how I would judge them or if I might know some of the people they were referring to. Either way, I feel that this is important information to consider alongside the interpretation of results in the following section.

Despite these issues, I believe that I have completed an analysis of the data that is of a sufficient quality and rigor for the research question to be answered.

## **6. RESULTS**

In this section I will present my findings from the Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA; Smith et al, 2009) of the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. I aim to present a rich and detailed account of the lived experiences of the participants in relation to their position as individuals who are undergoing a doctorate in clinical psychology and who self identify as being of MWE origin.

Three major themes emerged from the analysis and will form the basis of this account:

- ***The double edged sword of invisible difference***
- ***Uncovering the undercurrents of difference***
- ***That which is sought and gained***

The IPA presented here should be recognized as only one possible way of making meaning from the material gained from interviewing participants. It is acknowledged that, due to the double hermeneutic present in IPA and influenced by my own perspective (Elliott et al, 1999),

Other researchers may produce a differing construction of how trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background make sense of their experiences. Even so, I have attempted to present a systematic and rigorous account of the participants' experiences.

All eight participants provided multilayered, rich accounts and so it is not possible to present all aspects and experiences here. Nevertheless, I aim to represent the divergence and convergence within themes to represent the idiosyncratic nature of experiences as well as how they may overlap with others. This is a key aim of the IPA process (Smith et al, 2009).

In order to illustrate my themes I will present verbatim<sup>1</sup> quotes from the interviewees throughout this section. Please see Appendix 12 for more detail on how these themes are represented over all eight interviews. The three master themes will now be presented along with corresponding sub-themes (See Table 2: Master themes). These will be reported alongside my reflections to indicate the reflexivity involved in the research process.

## **MASTER TABLE OF THEMES**

### **THE DOUBLE EDGED SWORD OF INVISIBLE DIFFERENCE**

- *Needing to work a bit harder*
- *The benefits and challenges of straddling two cultures*
- *Difference lost through invisibility*
- *The ambivalence and uncertainty of difference*

### **UNCOVERING THE UNDERCURRENTS OF DIFFERENCE**

- *Difference as interesting but not relevant*
- *Difference and diversity involving risk*
- *The impact of appearance on others' responses*
- *Others assumptions of sameness*

### **THAT WHICH IS SOUGHT AND GAINED**

- *Increased awareness of self*
- *The need for explicitness in diversity*
- *Safety and comfort in others' diversity*

*Table 2: Master themes*

<sup>1</sup>Verbatim extracts: The extracts presented in this section have been amended to improve readability. Repeated words, minor hesitations and words such as um have been deleted. The use of ... indicates deleted text or continuation of text. All identifying information has been deleted and aliases used.



## **6.1 THE DOUBLE EDGED SWORD OF AN INVISIBLE DIFFERENCE**

### **Overview**

Being a trainee clinical psychologist from a MWE background is an experience that was approached differently by participants. Although some embraced this difference, others were still in the process of working out what this meant for them. Some were open about their difference and others wished to hide it. This seems a unique position of those with an invisible difference, leading to flexibility in how they identified themselves. Participants could disclose and discuss their difference when they felt safe to do so but also kept this information hidden from others when they felt unsafe or that it would put them at a disadvantage. Also, participants experienced needing to work harder to be understood.

The invisibility of participants' difference meant that it was often forgotten and went unacknowledged. This brought doubts as to how their difference would be received and whether it should be discussed i.e., are they different enough to count. Most participants integrated well with the majority group and so often did not have to face their difference. This led to a confusion and uncertainty around their difference as they are still part of the majority white British female trainee clinical psychologist group and yet they still felt different. These feelings were often subtle and therefore difficult to describe.

#### **6.1.1 Needing to work a bit harder**

*...I might have a particular view on something...and then I feel like I need to explain...my experiences...why that is that I might have a different view to other people...that conversation was helpful but...it sort of illustrated the types of conversations I regularly have to have with people...I'm always having to maybe explain...what I mean by something...(Isis)*

This quote illustrates the position that many of the participants find themselves in where, due to their hidden difference and others' assumptions and generalisations, they feel that they are not understood or known by peers. Isis's use of the words "explain more" indicates the theme that these trainees feel they need to work harder than their peers at being understood. She does this repeatedly and questions how much people are aware of difference and other cultures, which also motivates her to explain her difference to others.

Anya, like Isis, talks about her difference as making her seem “really strange” to others on her course but, like several of the participants, is wary of explaining her difference to peers. Participants experiences of needing to justify themselves when giving an opinion in teaching makes them less likely to do so in the future. As Anya describes, silence takes up less “energy.” Her use of this word points towards just how tiring and draining explaining her difference may be and so she prefers to make excuses for her difference or distance herself. She sees her difference as negative and stays quiet to keep it hidden when issues of diversity are being discussed. Alexandra also discusses “not talking” when issues come up in teaching that are more related to her, sensing that it is best not to talk. She feels her silence is an unconscious decision. This highlights an underlying and unspoken feeling for several participants, that it is best to avoid discussion of one’s difference. Alexandra’s silence around her difference may be linked to her experiences of those related to training being surprised that she “might not be the way they expect.” She is quick to ensure that I am aware this is only her assumptions, as there is also a silence around others’ assumptions of her.

As with many of the participants, Isis seems to feel that she must counterbalance possible negative comments about peers with positive ones. For example, when she states that explaining herself can be “helpful,” even though she finds this frustrating. She finds it difficult to express this frustration explicitly which seems to be due to a wish not to criticise her peers. Perhaps this comes from an underlying wish of participants to belong in their cohorts; they do not want to ‘other’ themselves too much as difference might be responded to negatively. There seems a contradiction here. As Isis demonstrates, although on one level she may wish to belong, on another she is very aware of her difference, even though others are not.

Several participants felt, when attempting to access training, that their difference would affect their chances of succeeding. They did not want people to think that they were not committed to the role and may be unreliable, wanting to relocate to another country after training. They felt that they had to compensate for this and Anya was surprised that she was accepted on to training, feeling that others who attempted to access training who are white British held “animosity” towards her.

Several of the participants felt that they have to work harder in relation to client work and peers, as they have not grown up in the UK. This is something that seems implicitly ingrained but also highlights the importance of developing clinical skills to work with and address difference,

finding ways to see this as an opportunity. Anya's difference, much like Izzie's, leads her to believe she is not good enough and so she works hard to integrate. Several participants described family as not supporting or encouraging their career choice or being unaware of what is involved. This added to their feeling that they have had to work harder for what they have achieved. Alexandra and Sara discussed conflicts between parent's ideas for their path in life, the cultural expectations placed upon them and their expectations, which mirrors the conflicts between the different cultures they must negotiate.

*I wonder if my colleagues sometimes who have had the traditional British up bringing...have...their work...scrutinized as much as mine is...I think sometimes it's about how I protect myself in the things I write and...in communication with multidisciplinary teams... (Natalia)*

Natalia also wonders whether her difference puts her at a disadvantage to others in relation to how much her work is scrutinized. Her use of the words "how she protects" herself point towards some danger involved in the course, perhaps because she is being assessed but also she may feel she is being assessed because of her difference.

### **6.1.2 The benefits and challenges of straddling two cultures**

This theme highlights both the strengths and issues that come with a MWE background. Sara emphasized a feeling that most participants shared of not belonging to either of their cultures; neither one nor the other, "a bit of a hybrid." Lisa also talked about this but, unlike the majority of participants, did not see her difference as anything to be worried about and did not feel it impacted on training.

*...I was not British like them I've also had to...adapt, to...try and...fit in or to function in British society, I certainly could relate to clients who...were second generation living in Britain...(Sara)*

Sara discussed the adaptability that her mixed background had given her, which several other participants also mentioned, as well as the isolation and loneliness that some feel. Anya feels that her adaptability and flexibility have aided her to integrate. Integration for some came at a price and, in Anya's case, her country of origin is almost alien to her now. Prior to training, Lisa attempted to adapt her accent in order to belong.

*...just let me be British, I wish I was British...I wish I didn't have to be different...(Anya)*

Anya described a challenge that comes with her difference and is tired of straddling two cultures, as she states in the following striking comment:

*It's almost like giving up a bit of yourself or like wearing a...not a mask, I never go beyond lying but I probably withhold information that...would not be that well received...to make sure that I fit in...so I don't actually get pointed out too much. (Anya)*

There seems a huge importance placed on fitting in and little room for Anya's difference on training. She has spent so long "covering up and not talking...it almost became an automatic pattern." She sacrifices parts of herself in order to belong to the majority training group and withholds pieces of herself that she feels might not be received well.

*...I've wanted to fit in as well in a way and I think it's only now that I'm a bit older that I might start to kind of connect a bit more with...ways of life or cooking or...baking or...whatever it is that makes me maybe feel a bit more aware that actually I'm not from this country. (Izzie)*

Izzie, like several other participants, feels that she has adapted and fully assimilated to the majority culture. This has lead to her losing part of her culture. It seems she may have denied a part of herself in order to fit in and it is only now that she is beginning to reconnect with her culture and start a new relationship with her difference. Perhaps for some with invisible difference, like Izzie, their difference can only be confronted once feelings of belonging and acceptance by the majority emerge.

*...I was aware that it was a clash and I'm able now to make more sense of that whereas at the time I probably just sat with the clash...I did get quite angry as a child and maybe it was something about...that kind of cultural identity not quite being thought through and not having a coherent one or not being able to move around the two and...negotiate those whereas now I think I can do that. Sometimes I will choose...So I think I'm sort of more able to understand it...I can kind of formulate myself. (Alexandra)*

Alexandra's quote describes the flexibility that comes with participants mixed backgrounds. Many participants describe the ability to choose how they identify depending on the circumstances they find themselves in. Their identity is something that is fluid and allows the negotiation of different cultures. Alexandra's experiences, at times conflicting, have made her more open and unafraid of mistakes and asking questions. Izzie talks about her difference as "something that you can kind of take or leave." It seems she can hide behind her trainee identity and so she does not have to confront her difference. She can easily integrate and be from any white ethnic background and is not defined by her cultural background.

*So I would say that I conform to a...stereotype within professional relationships...(Lisa)*

Lisa also uses the choice that her mixed background gives. She discloses her background to bring out the image she wishes to display. She uses others assumptions of her background when they fit with her and when she likes to be seen as such. When people take "the mickey" she does as well, perhaps in an effort to integrate and belong but perhaps because she does not care and it is not important.

Sara highlighted the majority of participant's experience that exposure to difference leads to sensitivity to issues of diversity. Through Sara's exposure to difference she has become more aware of different "ways of practicing psychology." She feels that others in her cohort have not had this and so do not take into account the impact of culture or raise issues of diversity as she does. Several participants discuss their awareness and sensitivity to clients' culture and background, and Natalia uses this when formulating and carrying out interventions as well as bringing a different perspective to colleagues when team working.

*...in terms of...being a trainee, I think it's helpful having had experiences of living in different cultures and...having to integrate...it's made me sensitive to cultural issues...(Isis)*

Isis also feels, like several other participants, she is less likely to make assumptions that others will have similar views to her and this is facilitated by her experiences of having an invisible difference.

*...you can take a bit more ownership of it...I'd feel a bit more confident about highlighting issues of power and diversity and how maybe...I can...relate to some of those issues,*

*experiences...second hand. For example, maybe working with a refugee family, I have that in my background. (Alexandra)*

Alexandra also discusses feeling like she is more tolerant of others' differences due to her background. She feels that she can use her exposure to difference in her coursework putting her in a position that is different to many peers. She can draw on her personal experiences to inform her work and feels that she is more like the people she sees in comparison to peers. Other participants also feel that they can use their difference to relate to clients and to contribute in teaching sessions.

*...my position's quite unique in that... when I meet people, and if they do have...funny beliefs about...people... because...I just...look English and sound English...it lets me see people in their...true light...people just say things, that they don't hold back. (Joanna)*

Joanna, like other participants, talks about her unique position of her invisible difference allowing her to see people's prejudices. She is then in a position of control and power, as she lets people "dig their own hole" and waits until they have disclosed their prejudices before informing them of her background, watching them become uncomfortable in the process. Due to this she knows "what it feels like to hear not very nice things said about your background." Interestingly, she talks about this prejudice as being very different to racism in the visible sense, as if what she has experienced does not count, perhaps due to comments not being directed at her skin colour.

### **6.1.3 Difference lost through invisibility**

*...if your accent isn't as strong or...doesn't give an indication that that is where you're...from then people might just make the assumption that you're British...and talking about things...there isn't anything else behind that. (Isis)*

Here Isis describes the loss of her difference due to it being one that is hidden. This is felt by the majority of the participants, who feel their invisible difference leads to a lack of understanding, especially in relation to peers.

*...because it's not visible you wouldn't be asked directly...you wouldn't...always asked about culture...you don't get asked the same way as if you have something that symbolizes a belief or a view that other people might know about, you know like a Buddha spot or a different skin colour...something that people can ask about or relate something to...(Alexandra)*

Here Alexandra discusses the impact of her invisible difference and how it leads to others not asking her about her culture. As with other participants, she discusses the importance of explicit cues which prompt people to discuss culture. In the absence of this, one's culture seems less easily mentioned and so to some extent ignored. Due to the absence of a visible difference, several participants discussed identifying, or wanting to identify, themselves as white British, meaning that the richness of their background may then get lost. This is perhaps what also happens on training and in teaching when some participants remain silent about their difference.

Several participants wondered how much people hold their difference in mind, as they do not stand out as different. Culture seems a forgotten piece of one's identity and overlooked as a key aspect of this. This seems particularly pertinent when one does not look different. Participants also described an increased awareness of difference through the comparison of self to others. Isis described how others on her course who are from a similar background are responded to differently due to their background being more visible, as Lisa says, "people don't get constantly reminded." It seems Isis highlights her peers making allowances for other trainees that they would not make for her because her difference is hidden. Isis describes losing her accent, which perhaps points to a loss of a more significant kind.

Several participants felt that their difference was important and some felt more ambivalent about this. Alexandra did not feel her difference was important enough to discuss in teaching and she does not feel excluded because of it. She believes this is probably due to being "visibly similar" and that "it's really difficult for people to look beyond that". Alexandra talks about how visible difference impacts upon behaviours towards others and that, as her skin colour is white, people assume that there is no difference or diversity present.

*It's the little nuances that you notice, there is not a huge difference because obviously I am white and I come from the European Union and so I'm similar to a degree but there are little nuances that I pick up on and think, I don't understand why that happened. Why people said that or why do you expect me to do that doesn't really fit with my concepts. (Anya)*

Anya also discusses the importance of her skin colour leading to a subtlety in her difference and this does not “get acknowledged.” She talks about the “little nuances” that make up her difference which seems unimportant to others. She discusses attempting to make her difference unimportant so that others “don’t get a chance” to acknowledge it. She attempted to take full responsibility for this, perhaps not wanting to paint her colleagues in a bad light. Apparently, she does not have close relationships on the course and others do not seem to make an effort with her. I wonder whether she does this so that she is not seen as different. It may be that she uses so much energy trying to belong she has none left to integrate socially and form relationships with peers on training.

Several participants talk about others in their cohort having an invisible difference but for some conversations around this have not been had. I wonder whether this points towards these individuals wanting to fit the white majority trainee group or perhaps this it is due to being part of the majority ethnic group and so the difference of those from a MWE background does not matter.

#### **6.1.4 The ambivalence and uncertainty of difference**

Several participants demonstrate the uncertainty and contradiction that seem to come with a more hidden difference and find examples of instances (such as when they had felt different to colleagues) difficult to think of. This seems to be due to the differences in those from a MWE background often being subtle, as are the differences in how this group are treated by others. Some participants’ uncertainty may be around whether they feel their difference counts, which in Isis’s case leads her to be unsure about discussing aspects of difference. As with other participants, Natalia finds it difficult to identify examples that highlight her feelings of being different but not different enough. Natalia feels confused as to how much her ethnicity or cultural background play a role in her differences, highlighting the complexity of ethnicity and culture and perhaps the lack of space on training for the exploration of these issues, making topics in the interview quite new to all participants.

*...I feel a little bit...confused...wondering whether...sometimes I’ve been contradicting myself in what I’ve been saying...it’s just such a...really difficult area... (Izzie)*



Izzie talks about feeling confused about her difference. This might be due to being European and her difference being subtle. The use of the term 'contradictory' sums up many of the interviews. Izzie's uncertainty is also around her feeling that culture is defined too narrowly and so many experiences are then missed:

*...it is...important to be aware of where you're from and how it has shaped you as a person but...there is a tendency to think of cultural difference in terms of the country of origin...it's just not so simple as that...there's a danger when we focus too much on...the country of origin that we silence other experiences or voices that are about experiences that actually maybe have shaped us a lot more than where we were born...(Izzie)*

This highlights, again, the complexity of the topic of diversity and difference and also Izzie's subtle difference; not different enough. Izzie feels that her course approach difference and diversity in a broad sense and that this approach to diversity is important.

When discussing support needed for trainees from a MWE background, Isis seemed confused stating "I don't know that we'd need a specific sort of support" before stating that it might be quite helpful. Others view of her as the same, as well as membership of the majority group, causes her uncertainty about her difference and its validity. She does not like being viewed as the same as others as she is different. This ambivalence and uncertainty around support has also been expressed by several other participants.

*...I'm sort of judging that they are more relevant to me because I'm putting myself out as different to the other people in the group who look and speak just like me...I suppose it's that dilemma of when am I different, how am I different, do I want to be different in this context or am I happy to be lumped in and just be the same in some ways. (Alexandra)*

Alexandra discusses the dilemma that several other participants experience; feeling different to peers who look and sound exactly like them. This makes it difficult for Alexandra to be certain about her difference and how she would like to be seen; in one sense for her difference to be acknowledged but in another to be kept hidden in order to belong. Alexandra is also unsure about what support might be needed for trainees in her position and at first, as Isis, she does not feel more specific support is needed. She then states that perhaps this is because of her difference being so hidden and that:

*...maybe that's why I'm saying it's not important to have an extra support. Maybe the invisibility of it should make it more important to have a labeled thing...a very labeled, specific group support network. (Alexandra)*

Anya also talks about the dilemma of feeling different but not wanting to be singled out. Help seeking would have to be in a “really silent invisible way” so that her difference is not highlighted; the ambivalence of difference and sameness. Her use of the word silent highlights how she is silent about difference; her difference is silent and unnoticed.

Natalia points to contradictions made by two participants; on one hand they feel they are treated differently from peers but on the other differences are forgotten. This may be linked with the two participants possessing a difference that is less hidden in the sense that they have an accent. We see here from Natalia's comments that being treated differently is not always welcome, perhaps because she wishes to be treated the same.

*...you can hardly say that they have more support but just the fact that there was a separate list...and all the rest has to wait and being who I am I have to wait like everybody else...the fact that I felt different but not as different as and that difference was not acknowledged...I was different but not different enough, we were in the same boat just quiet...(Natalia)*

Natalia discusses needing support around her difference at the beginning of training but feeling that she could not use the list of personal advisors for those from BME backgrounds, which were given out first. She felt different from the majority trainee group but also from those of a BME background. Natalia wonders if those from a MWE background would benefit from the same forms of support given to those from BME backgrounds and if it would be helpful for courses not to be so “strict to the extreme differences.” As discussed earlier in relation to Izzie, perhaps difference is defined too narrowly.

Several participants find it difficult to pinpoint definite aspects and examples of how training has influenced their personal life and how this is related to their background. Lisa talks about being more influenced by family culture, religion, and different parts of her identity rather than nationality and ethnicity. For several participants, their culture is not the organizing experience and is overridden by the rest of their identity. For example, for Alexandra, class plays a

particularly important role and it is difficult to separate the impact of these different parts of her identity and the interplay between these.

*...there have been times where...we felt like oh for God's sake...just give a CBT lecture...you can over talk those things...it's really important to be aware of culture and reflect on it...in some ways... there should be more thinking about it on placement... the university promoting this across the different settings to not just keep it in a vacuum here...when I'm on placement it's a lot easier to focus on the diversity of the clients rather than our own diversity...you don't want to overdo the diversity thing...that it comes like a political correct thing.....but...equally I think it's really important to have lots of teaching on it...(Izzie)*

Izzie spoke about her ambivalence around diversity and difference teaching and that diversity should be promoted across training not only in university. She feels that on placement it is easier to ignore ones own culture and, in a sense, she might be happy to do so rather than facing these issues. Even so, she feels that ones own culture needs to be thought about but “not to make too much of a point”. Her position of an invisible difference perhaps gives her that choice of whether to make “a point of it.” She feels that culture can be spoken about too much and this could be linked to how many white British, majority group members feel; why do people keep going on about it? It seems that for several participants that it is more comfortable to focus on a client's culture than their own, especially because if one thinks about personal difference the issues that come along with this will need to be addressed.

## **6.2 UNCOVERING THE UNDERCURRENTS OF DIFFERENCE**

### **Overview**

This theme highlights participants' views of the hidden nature that the topic of difference and diversity still holds. Difference is often experienced as not really valued; or perhaps only tokenistically so. A need for issues around difference and diversity to be explicitly named and for ideas and views around culture to be broadened was highlighted by several of the participants. The idea and topic of difference still seems to be shrouded in a veil of risk and danger, which stops participants from discussing their difference. It is the experience of some, that interest is shown in their difference but this can be felt as false and tokenistic. Integration is preferred and similarities between trainees emphasized and highlighted, as difference often has negative repercussions.

### 6.2.1 Difference as interesting but not relevant

Isis summarised a theme that emerged in several participant accounts around participants interest in cultural issues not matched in others and difference and diversity not highlighted as being relevant. She discussed those related to training showing an interest in an attempt to find stereotypes and commonalities between all people from one country and culture. At the same time, Isis also enjoys others' interest when they realise her difference. Perhaps this helps her to feel accepted despite her difference.

*It might be viewed as being slightly trivial, or not as important...Not that they would mean it like that...I wouldn't want people to think that I was kind of just being over-sensitive...(Isis)*

As with several other participants, Isis talks about her difference as unimportant which seems to be emphasised due to the lack of support mentioned for people of difference with white ethnicity. She is unsure whether she would feel comfortable approaching a general support system and worries that she might be viewed negatively if she were to discuss her ethnic background. It seems that she feels silenced because she is part of the majority as well as the minority.

Like Alexandra, Sara also acknowledges her difference but at the same time down plays this at times in the interview, again giving the impression that her difference is unimportant and not relevant when thinking about her peer group and supervision contexts. Similarities seem important to several participants suggesting that commonalities are uniting and so differences are potentially dividing and so better ignored. Alexandra calls this "the conflict of training."

*...once your fully engaged in the course, the fact that we're different nationalities...fades into the background because the thing that unifies us is the work that we're doing...just being on the course is very unifying...it doesn't matter that we all have fairly diverse cultural backgrounds and...nationalities. (Sara)*

Several participants discuss their difference not emerging in supervision and, certainly for Izzie, there is no expectation that it should. Some participants only discuss their difference when

others broach the topic, highlighting that others take responsibility for raising this issue. Natalia on the other hand feels that supervisors will do so if the opportunity arises but are tentative.

*...sometimes it feels like I'm treading on eggshells...you don't want to go cracking too many of them...to be invisible and not to be noticed you need to learn not to, to tread around very carefully...I've tried my hardest you know not to upset anybody fit in as much as possible...just become as British as possible...(Anya)*

Anya sees her difference as not being relevant. She does not feel that the course staff notice her difference as they have not spent much time with her. It seems if she shows her difference others will be upset and her peers have made it clear that they are not interested in understanding her difference. She feels she cannot seek support as she is seen as integrated. If she shows that she struggles this would highlight her difference and counteract the work she has done to belong. Like most participants, she valued the interview for allowing her a space to discuss her difference.

*...I...listen to it with interest but from a position of this doesn't really apply to me personally. I think, that's how I experience it; I don't ever think of myself as...separate ethnic group to...white majority in my class...(Joanna)*

Like Anya's peers, difference does not seem relevant to Joanna, as she does not feel or see herself as a different ethnicity to the majority, therefore teaching on difference and diversity does not apply to her. She also sees her culture as similar to that of white British and so there is "no clash" so it seems she does not need to think about difference and diversity. She has been subject to discriminatory comments about her nationality on placement but seems not to have discussed this with her supervisor.

*There is this overall sense of guilt...of the white middle class female majority...especially when people talk about the power and the professional role and their personal lives...they do feel sometimes inadequate for being in this dominant role, well some people have verbalized that...In that small kind of more private conversation the guilt comes through and their quite explicit about it I think... (Natalia)*

Natalia sees her course team as feeling that the topic of difference and diversity is relevant but, as with other participants, she feels that it is her peers that impose silence around the topic. Course staff wish to address difference but peers are “resistant about this.” Natalia believes that this response from peers is due to the guilt of the majority white British trainee. This guilt comes from the power and position of their roles, leading them to ignore differences as oppose to facing such a challenging topic. In teaching, the majority do not wish to discuss difference dominating and imposing their own agenda. There is a lack of discussion around ethnicity, even in relation to those who are visibly different, which is felt to be the case by several other participants.

### **6.2.2 Difference and diversity involving risk**

*It certainly is never, ever addressed or spoken about because it's...seen as being...a political hot potato they don't know how your going to interpret what they say, is there going to be misinterpretation or misunderstanding and it's seen as...I think I'll stick my neck out here and say I think some people see it as being a fairly dangerous area, that there on thin ice if they start doing that. (Sara)*

Sara sums up the theme that emerged several times throughout the interviews; the view that it is risky in clinical psychology to talk about diversity. She believes that peers and colleagues are afraid that others will misinterpret comments about diversity. Due to the level of political correctness in the UK, even talking about race might be seen as racism. Sara feels that she is the only person in her cohort to speak out in teaching on diversity since she does not worry about the risk involved. She sees this as the biggest difference between herself and her peers. It seems that trainees are risk adverse when it comes to taking chances and discussing issues that are perhaps a controversial or difficult topic.

*...if we're talking on a professional level...a professional issue or a theoretical issue, something formal or academic that's not considered because I don't think anybody tries to consider that but if there's an informal conversation over coffee on a break then that comes up. (Natalia)*

Natalia also discussed the risk that peers seem to feel about discussing their differences, even those who are more obviously different. Peers will talk informally but will not do so in a more

formal one, perhaps due to feeling silenced when put on the spot. This includes peers interested in Natalia's difference who are curious but ask about it only in an informal setting.

Alexandra spoke about the risk of discussing difference due to unknown alliances that clients might have to particular political issues and their assumptions of her, hidden ethnicity. She feels that political issues should not to be addressed in therapy as it is too risky to do so. As alluded to by Natalia, above, Alexandra feels conversations around difference can be had if one does not feel threatened.

*...supervisors who are...assessing you... immediately you have that dilemma...that actually what I tell this person might have some impact on whether I pass this placement...how open is it safe for me to be...I'm sure people do make some evaluation of what it means...if they know this information... (Alexandra)*

Alexandra feels that it is risky to discuss her cultural and ethnic background with supervisors as she is unsure what assumptions they will make and how this might impact upon her being assessed. Her use of the word 'dilemma,' which appears several times in relation to her cultural identity throughout her interview, seems to highlight a dilemma she has with negotiating her ethnic and cultural identity and not feeling safe enough to disclose aspects of her culture in case it reflects badly upon her. There is a contradiction here where she states that she does not worry that she will be judged but that she knows people will make assumptions, pointing towards an innate, implicit feeling that it is unsafe to discuss difference. Natalia also feels this way and discusses others having information about her as if it is dangerous; they can "do whatever they want" with it and so she is put in a vulnerable position and she has to "pay the price," which seems to be others knowing about her difference and judging her. She is comfortable discussing her nationality more than her ethnicity, perhaps because others do not see her ethnicity as important as she is not visibly different. Natalia counts herself as lucky that people have had positive reactions to her difference.

Alexandra has seen the reaction of colleagues to others who are more obviously different where remarks and jokes are made, which motivate her to want to be the "same."

*...they don't try to understand, they find the differences...as if it's amusing...if they have found something I've said or done quite funny or amusing...they want to know more about it not*

*because they want to get to know me...they want me to integrate as much as possible with them and adapt to them as much as possible... (Anya)*

Like Alexandra, Anya's experience is that differences are often not treated sincerely, and sometimes laughed at.

Several participants discuss the disclosure of difference in their client work. Anya feels comfortable with her difference in this area but that others, like her supervisor, would feel she should not be disclosing this to clients. This leads Anya to avoid discussing these issues in supervision and she gives the impression that she may get in to some sort of trouble. Izzie is also unsure about disclosure but sees this as an opportunity for learning, highlighting several participants' uncertainty. This topic does not seem to get discussed in a meaningful way and so does not aid in demonstrating to trainees how they should be approaching disclosure.

Joanna spoke about a colleague on one of her placements being offensive about ethnic groups. This went unchallenged and Joanna plays down the offensive aspect of the comments with words such as "lazy" and "casual." This may facilitate her not disclosing her difference to others. She is unsure whether she discussed this issue with her supervisor and did not want to make a big deal out of it. It seems it is easier to ignore these issues and allow them to go unnoticed rather than take the risk of speaking up.

### **6.2.3 The impact of appearance on others' responses**

This theme describes the impact that the appearance of difference and diversity can have on others' responses, both on an individual level and organisational level.

*...maybe if it was more obvious in your appearance you might...be able to identify that people with differences can still get somewhere, if it was more obvious that you were from a particular culture...(Isis)*

Isis talks about the appearance of difference and what this might mean to her clients. She discusses feeling that if she appeared different this would aid her in her client work with ethnic minority groups. She feels it might be encouraging to clients to know of her difference, demonstrating that being from a different culture is not necessarily a disadvantage. If her



difference was visible then it would be explicit and disclosure to clients would not be an issue. She talked about her client feeling alone and I wonder if she also refers to her situation, as it is synonymous with that of her clients; they both work with predominantly white British individuals and Isis's client feels at a disadvantage because of this.

*...thinking about my year, there's nobody that you would describe as black...that's not to say that there aren't people who may have had very similar experience to some one that might be black...it's...a visible difference versus an invisible one that you actually don't know by looking at them...I suppose there's the box ticking side of it and then there's the...what is the meaning of people's experiences...what have they actually got from them that can contribute to their personal...and...professional development as well to make them good psychologists...(Alexandra)*

Alexandra spoke about the appearance of difference and what this means organizationally. She feels difference and diversity are often used tokenistically in clinical psychology and that the word culture is "batted around that nobody really...knows the meaning of or has so many meanings it becomes meaningless." She feels that even though there are policies around diversity and difference, these do not seem to be put into action and organizations do not adhere to them, especially in relation to those who access clinical psychology training. Alexandra seems to speak about difference and diversity as defined by people's experiences and not just skin colour. Her use of the word "versus" brings to mind an image of two opposing sides that struggle against each other. As with Isis, Alexandra seems to be talking about her own experiences but is not explicit about this. Anya also discusses the impact of appearance of difference in how difference and diversity is defined on her training course; almost exclusively in relation to "somebody who actually got a different skin colour."

*...it didn't feel at first hand that diverse as it actually is and I think I would hate to think that...recruits certain people just to live up to an expectation of the kind of course they are...I think it's a good thing so I think it was a bit of a dilemma. On the one hand it was like, oh really we haven't got more people from black and minority ethnic groups...But equally it's also good to see that they take the people that they think are best suited to the course and not just someone based on where they're from... (Izzie)*

Izzie talks about her mixed feelings about the diversity in her cohort and wonders whether her cohort is diverse enough, as everyone looks like the stereotypical trainee. She goes on to attempt to justify what she sees as a lack of diversity and perhaps is also justifying her position as a member of the majority. She highlights, as Anya and Alexandra, the importance that is placed on the appearance of difference and training appearing to meet criteria for difference and diversity.

Anya considers herself lucky that she does not appear different as she feels that those who do find it more difficult, feeling their difference much more than she. Natalia also feels, as Anya, that those with a visible difference can struggle more and she speaks of peers who are from a BME background who act as if they need to “compensate” for their difference by being the model trainee.

#### **6.2.4 Others’ assumptions of sameness**

Several participants discuss others’ assumptions of their ethnicity and the majority spoke about others assuming that they are the same as the majority group of white British clinical trainees, making assumptions about backgrounds and experiences.

Isis felt that her peers have a tendency to assume others are similar to them. This may occur due to all peers sharing the experience of training. This may take away from the richness of individual experience and may point to a reluctance to explore difference. It also possibly highlights the importance placed on appearance. Isis discusses her experiences in the context of training but uses the word “people” rather than specifically indicating that she is referring to her peers

*...is there anything that we need to think about, how do you celebrate Easter, do you have Easter...it’s Easter weekend what you planning to do, any chocolate eggs, without even thinking maybe they don’t have...chocolate eggs...It...feels like I don’t stand out enough to be considered different but I do feel different. (Anya)*

Anya highlights others assumptions that her cultural practices are the same as the dominant culture. Like Isis, several participants state that they are not different enough for their difference to be considered.

*There was something of that shared language that is assumed, not directly spoken about which people use all the time which I didn't have and that wasn't about English language, grammar, words, more about certain knowledge...(Natalia)*

Natalia, like Anya, points to others' assumption of sameness in regards to a shared language that people have that's gained from sharing backgrounds and experiences. This assumption of her possession of this shared language is perhaps heightened due to her invisible difference.

Isis discussed how others assumptions of sameness might be helpful in clinical work as "some people favour white British and they could identify with you...that might...help...with a therapeutic alliance." This then implies that being from differing cultural backgrounds might be unhelpful and shows Isis's assumption that similar cultural backgrounds between clients and therapists increase the therapeutic alliance.

### **6.3 THAT WHICH IS SOUGHT AND GAINED**

#### **Overview**

This theme highlights aspects that are sought on training by participants and that which is gained through the training experience in relation to participants' difference. Training has brought an increased awareness and insight to participants in regards to their difference, as well as the assumptions they make about others. For most participants, safety and belonging comes in the presence of others' difference, which then allows them to discuss their own. Support is sometimes not sought due to wishing to belong to the majority group. Trainees have also gained awareness into the need for issues of difference and diversity to be made explicit and highlighted openly and honestly.

#### **6.3.1 Increased awareness of self**

*I am much more open now...than before. I'm more willing to...talk...to...be aware of things that can...influence your work...it's made me a little bit more open...It's getting me to think...to integrate various things and various points of view...I got to know myself more as well...I guess I realized some of the patterns I had in myself... (Anya)*

Anya sums up the theme of increased awareness of self. She discussed, as did Isis, training as aiding her to identify cultural patterns and norms in her culture of origin which are less helpful to her in relation to training. Training has aided her to challenge these and Anya has now adapted in regards to her difficulty sharing and reflecting with others. This demonstrates the flexibility needed to adapt an aspect that seemed implicitly ingrained. It seems that she has received little help in regards to adapting to a culture that is not her own and the culture of training. Reflection and self disclosure is not something that is culturally appropriate for Anya but this seems unrecognized by her course. She has not approached the course team to discuss this due to her cultural rules and assumptions regarding how one deals with those seen to be in power.

It seems Anya's course has also not actively facilitated exploration into trainees' cultural backgrounds and how this might impact on their training. Most participants discuss the availability of a space that those from BME backgrounds can access and so perhaps the course has overlooked Anya's background due to her difference being less visible, partly because she has integrated.

Alexandra also feels that training has increased her self awareness, specifically around the values, judgments and assumptions she makes about others; she now takes a more critical and questioning stance. She makes particular reference to her assumptions being based on appearance and perhaps her experiences of training and being pre-judged by aspects, such as her name, have led her to reevaluate her own assumptions.

*...it's made me more questioning of everything...Especially where I train, we're...encouraged to deconstruct everything...I...look at the world slightly differently and slightly more questioning...slightly more cynically. But...it's definitely...opened up my thinking...not to take things at face value...to try and think about people and their backgrounds, perhaps, slightly differently, to what I did before in a slightly less simplistic way. (Joanna)*

Joanna reflects Alexandra's feelings about the importance and impact of her course ideology on her personal development and discusses how she is more cynical since training and also takes a more critical stance. Joanna has perhaps only begun to think more about these issues since training, which may point towards her sense of confusion and uncertainty about her own culture and ethnicity and the impact of these, discussed previously.

### 6.3.2 The need for explicitness in diversity

*...you need to be more...upfront about it...and that you just need to discuss...issues about ethnicity and not be... frightened of talking about it. (Isis)*

Isis highlighted a theme present for many participants: the importance of explicitness around issues of diversity and the need to discuss ethnicity on training. Her use of the word “more” points towards a need for an increase in doing this, giving a sense that this is perhaps not something that is done enough on training. She also talks about the importance of not being afraid to discuss and raise issues around culture in her client work. She feels that her honesty about what she does not know facilitates the process of “moving forward” in her therapeutic work and what is important is not to ignore issues. The possible need for her training course to facilitate more explicitness around diversity is further emphasised in the following quote:

*...just having more opportunity to discuss difference...like within the course...just being able to talk about difference more often, so that it's more obvious, and then...perhaps, seen as more appropriate...to bring up issues...relating to difference...that's what would be helpful... (Isis)*

Isis discussed how explicitness in training would encourage trainees to be more explicit generally, demonstrating the appropriateness of raising issues around difference and diversity. The use of “more appropriate” may point towards the idea that perhaps, as explicitness around diversity is not occurring, trainees are wary of discussing these issues; they may be given the message that this topic is best left unexplored. Natalia feels that action also needs to be taken. She acknowledges the impossibility of specific support for all differences present in her cohort but feels that “it would be nice to have a little more than just ‘fine there’s a difference’ but not do anything about it.”

Sara notes how little she hears clinical psychologists discussing issues. She particularly focuses on the lack of conversation about the impact that change through working with psychology might have on one's cultural identity and the role this change might play in one's wider cultural and family system.

*It would be good to have more opportunities to discuss differences that aren't as obvious...I feel...should we be talking about our experiences, maybe my difference isn't as important.*

*Maybe we minimise people's experiences who belong to BME groups because ours isn't as obvious. (Isis)*

Like several other participants, Isis discussed the need for ideas around difference and diversity to be broadened to include groups who have a difference that is less obvious and who feel that they do not fit into the BME category. Joanna feels that “just making it explicit that you don't have to be from a...visible ethnic minority to access...the same support structures” that are available would be helpful. Isis worries whether she would be seen as “minimising” the experiences of those from BME groups if she discusses her difference. This highlights the unique position of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background, as they are seen to be part of the majority trainee group due to their appearance of having a white skin colour. This seems to lead to a feeling of guilt in Isis of discussing her difference as she, after all, is still a member of the majority group. This feeling seems akin to the guilt that white British trainees feel for being in the majority which leads them to avoid open discussion of difference as discussed by Natalia, above.

*I think I'd feel differently in terms of how legitimate the difference was because someone else thinks it is too and they've created this group thing for these types of people like me...so it would be a bit more legitimate for me to value the difference then I suppose...(Alexandra)*

Alexandra discussed how she feels that if the difference of trainees from a MWE background were recognised by courses, this might aid those who belong to this group feel less worried about being open and discussing their difference. Perhaps this lack of legitimacy facilitates Alexandra's feelings of uncertainty about the need for a formal support space for trainees of her ethnic background and worries that this might be “differencing too much.” Alexandra wonders whether a more general support group around cultural ideas might aid her to “have...more of a coherent story and...idea about what elements come into play...both within training and on the job.”

Isis points out that “difference and diversity teaching is more time limited than others” and assumes a safety among trainees to discuss issues outside of teaching, which Isis describes as not being the case. She feels that “teaching needs to be thought about so that there's more time and opportunity to discuss trainees' individual differences.” It seems that if little time is given to teaching on diversity and difference then a message is given that it is not important.

Isis and Alexandra discussed being attracted to training due to being able to discuss issues openly. This does not seem to have been their experience thus far on training, certainly in relation to difference and diversity. Several participants seemed committed to facing issues head on and attempt to be explicit about issues of difference and diversity but in relation to others difference not their own.

### **6.3.3 Safety and comfort in others' diversity**

*...I'm on placement with someone...we're always talking about the influence that our culture has on...the way that we are and the way that we view things...I don't know if that's because she's different as well that maybe we're more likely to have that conversation. (Isis)*

Isis highlighted a common theme around others seeking comfort and feeling safe to discuss issues of diversity, but only with the presence of difference in others. Isis discusses cultural issues with an individual on placement who is also from a non-British background. She wonders if, due to her colleague being “different” and similar to her in that sense, they are able, and more likely, to have these conversations. This may point towards an inability or discomfort having these types of conversations with others who are not “different” like her. Here it seems that Isis has found an exception to her more common experience of being the person who needs to explain herself and raise the topic of culture.

Sara also seems to take comfort from those who she sees as different in the same way as she and feels:

*...it would be nice if you could have regular contact with other trainees who present with fairly diverse backgrounds as, as you do. But given the demands of the training course it just wouldn't be practical I suppose...or perhaps well attended...(Sara)*

She discussed a wish to have contact with other trainees that are like her but follows this up with reasons why perhaps this would not be possible or not well attended. I wonder about the importance that is given to the topic of diversity and whether she feels there are not many trainees like her. Sara feels that the diversity in her cohort tends to be trainees who are from European countries and so support and comfort seem to lie in those who quite specifically

understand and can relate to her culture and its practices. She would like to see more diversity among the course staff team, as she feels this mirrors the majority group seen among trainees.

Several participants stated that they would seek aid from those that they saw as similar to them and it seems that some participants' feel that generic support systems might be unhelpful or uninterested in discussing their difference. Perhaps, again, this is because their difference might not be welcomed as it might not 'count.'

Anya also talks about finding comfort in similarities in relation to friends and peers whose backgrounds are similar to hers. She discusses this as perhaps stopping her from making the effort to interact with others in her cohort and how the group of "non-English" born trainees gravitate towards each other. Its "like a segregation in the group and we end up sitting together then the people actually arrange themselves around us." She does not wish to "segregate" herself from the rest of her peers but this seems to occur naturally. Anya spoke about the importance of her similarity with me, being from a MWE background, in the interview process. She felt able to discuss issues as she knew of my interest and that we shared understanding. This made "it so much easier to talk about it...it's actually quite nice to get it off your chest from time to time". She seemed to feel that if she speaks to some one without this similarity or interest she is "bothering" them.

As other participants have stated, difficulty with issues of difference seems to come from peers and so Anya feels that there is nothing that the course team can do to aid her feel accepted. Her use of the word "barrier" points towards her difference to her peers being a 'barrier' that cannot be changed, neither can her relationships within the cohort. It seems there can be no safety or comfort for Anya in her peers as the difference is too great.

Natalia feels safe to discuss issues related to ethnicity and her cultural background with those that she sees as being different in a way that is similar to her; having a similar background, ethnicity and experiences:

*...definitely use them more and I identified at the beginning of the course the people who would be in a similar position to me and we talk...about that when we have the opportunity. (Natalia)*



Natalia felt that having a supervisor from a similar background was useful because this meant that her difference was not a big deal. This is interesting as Natalia wishes for her difference to be acknowledged but at the same time does not want “a fuss” made about it.

*...to find out what other people say maybe because there isn't so much of a support network and these things are not spoken about so maybe it leaves an individual like me wondering...are those issues mine or do other people feel the same...(Natalia)*

Natalia's search for others who fit a similar ethnic background to her led her to take part in this research. It seems the experiences of those similar to her are an unknown due to the silence around difference and diversity and perhaps the silence of those who belong to the invisible category of those from a MWE background; unless this silence is broken it is difficult to know how this group and their experiences can be accessed.

## **7. DISCUSSION**

The study's findings will be considered in relation to the research question and the existing literature. The implications for clinical training and the methodological strengths and weaknesses of this research will then be examined.

### **7.1. REVISITING THE RESEARCH QUESTION**

As previously indicated the main research question was:

*How do trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background experience being part of a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology training course?*

The way in which participants from a MWE background deal with their difference on training, the possible impact that undergoing a clinical psychology doctorate may have on their identity and the support provided by training courses was explored.

#### **7.1.1 Dealing with difference in the training arena**

This section will address how trainee clinical psychologists deal with their difference in the various arenas of training. Being a trainee clinical psychologist from a MWE background is an experience that was approached differently by participants. Nevertheless, the majority expressed mixed, often contradictory, feelings regarding issues of difference and diversity. Several participants found examples of experiences of their difference difficult to verbalise. This seemed to be due to the differences in those from a MWE background often being subtle, as are the differences in how this group are treated by others.

The invisible nature of participants' difference played a large role in how they identified themselves and were perceived by others (Verkuyten and de Wolf, 2002). This is in line with the literature stating that the way in which the dominant group identify with multiracial people is associated with whether they look like this group. If mixed ethnic individuals can pass as one of the majority then they are more likely to be treated and seen as someone who is of one ethnicity (Dixon-Peters, 2010), which was an important finding in this research. Those connected to training assumed that participants were the same as the majority group of white British clinical

trainees meaning their culture is not accounted for. Their invisible difference also meant they had to deal with the assumptions of others based on appearance (Nishimura, 1998 cited in Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008).

Two participants whose difference was less hidden due to their accent felt on one hand that they were treated differently from peers, but on the other that their difference was forgotten. The fact that trainees had white skin seemed to play a vital role in how they were viewed by others; their appearance of sameness led to them being treated as the same. This was also considered an important factor in how others are treated. Anya considered herself lucky that she does not appear different, as those from a different race may feel their difference more.

Some participants seemed to have spent more time thinking about their difference than others and many were willing to think about this in relation to clients, but not to their selves. Trainees may feel uncomfortable in discussing issues of difference in relation to themselves due to their membership of the dominant white majority. This may explain the reluctance to discuss race and culture that also silences BME trainees (Adetimole et al, 2005). MWE trainees may conceal their difference due to past experiences of not being understood (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999), which could lead to difficulties adjusting on training. This reluctance may also come from MWE individuals white privilege. Alexandra points towards the dilemma of being different from those who she looks and sounds like. Possessing a skin colour that is white or light is associated with more privilege and desirability in many cultures (Dixon-Peters, 2010) and those from a mixed ethnic background have described being part of the dominant, oppressive group as well as the oppressed. These individuals have described attempting to find ways of moving beyond this by redefining themselves but also forgive themselves (Rocha, 2010). This seems a complex issue, especially since participants felt they needed to work harder at being understood.

It seems that due to their hidden difference participants were uncertain whether their difference counts and several participants felt different, but *not different enough*. Instances of this were also difficult to bring to mind as well as definite aspects and examples of how training has influenced their personal life in relation to their backgrounds. Some felt unsure of the role that ethnicity and culture plays and this may have been due to several participants feeling that their culture was not the organizing experience and is overridden by the rest of their identity. This has also been the case with others from multi-ethnic backgrounds (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004). As with Natalia, particular importance was placed on nationality, perhaps because this is one

place where individuals from a MWE can definitely belong. This highlights the complexity of ethnicity and culture, which may be difficult to verbalize, especially if individuals have not previously had the space to do so. Those from mixed ethnicities have been found to be unlikely to have means of articulating concerns (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004), which may explain this. Again, this perhaps highlights the lack of space on training for a meaningful exploration of these issues. This may have made topics in the interview quite new to all participants, which then added to uncertainty and contradictions. This may also highlight a need for MWE trainees to develop more complex ways of understanding themselves (Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008).

Participants spoke of the hidden nature that the topic of difference and diversity still holds. Difference is often experienced as not really valued or tokenistically so. It was the experience of several participants that interest was shown in their difference but this was at times felt as false and tokenistic. Also, their interest in cultural issues was not matched in others and difference and diversity not highlighted as being relevant. Several trainees spoke of feelings of isolation and loneliness on training, which was also a finding of Shah (2010). Past research has found that there is an increased risk that those from mixed ethnicities may isolate themselves as a form of avoidance and may experience confusion and isolation without full acceptance (Hershel, 1995 cited in Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). This does not need to be the case if individuals come from a system that celebrates difference, without a pressure to choose between cultures, groups and individuals (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999).

Many participants discussed the risk associated with the topic of difference and some felt that it was best not to address this topic. Others addressed the topic with those that they felt were similar to them. It seems that trainees are afraid of how they might be viewed if they discuss race and diversity. The majority of participants were risk adverse when it came to discussing their difference in teaching and perhaps their memberships to the majority group has caused this. This uncertainty around speaking out was also found with BME trainees (Rajan and Shaw, 2008). For the few who did take risks, their dual membership to a minority group may have encouraged this, as those who identify with the oppressed often attempt to make changes; they are likely to benefit from them far more than the dominant group (Miller, 2002).

During interviews it seemed that several participants wished to discuss issues that were important to them but not directly related to the research question, such as family and class. Focusing interviewees on their experiences of their ethnic and cultural backgrounds was difficult

at times. This, as well as participants confusion regarding this topic, may point towards a lack of space, or 'good enough' space in training to discuss, in a meaningful way, the impact of participants personal narratives of difference. Many participants also stated at the end of being interviewed that it was a rare occurrence that they were able to think about and reflect on the impact of their cultural identity on their training. This seems in line with the findings of Nel (2006) who also found that trainee family therapists had limited space and time allocated on clinical training to sense and meaning making in relation to identity. This study's findings may also suggest the importance of personally focused work on training, which could also relieve stress and increase personal resources (Nel, 2006). Participants may have felt safety and comfort in interviews due to my difference as an interviewer; training needs to find a way to replicate this.

### **7.1.2 How does training influence cultural identity?**

Findings highlight the complex cultural identity of those from MWE backgrounds and the added complexity brought by appearing the same as the dominant group. Participants viewed their cultural identity differently, but most described this as fluid, giving them the ability to be flexible (Sadao, 2003) and adaptable to different circumstances. This is a finding of Shah (2010) who examined trainees from a BME background. Some participants in this study described being able to pick and choose which parts of their mixed culture to identify with, dependent on the situation and circumstance.

Training increased participants self awareness and insight into their difference and assumptions and aided them to take a critical stance. Awareness has been found to be essential for evaluating issues raised by clients, both white and of colour (Gushue & Constantine, 2007). Participants described the ability to choose when to disclose their difference and when to hide it dependent on their feelings of safety. This fits with a past findings that bicultural individuals are in a unique position, holding different identities and navigating different cultural frameworks (Stroink & Lalonde, 2009), highlighting an enhanced cultural competence. Participants in the present study felt that due to their difference and increased exposure to this they had an increased sensitivity to diversity (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004). This seems a key strength for trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE which can be called upon in clinical and cross-cultural work (Benet-Martinez et al, 2002). Shah (2010) also reports this finding with BME trainees. As found with BME trainees (Adetimole et al, 2005), MWE trainees have skills that training needs to foster.

Cultural identity seemed less important or thought about in those participants who came from a European country that considered their cultures to be similar to British culture. Those from a European background seemed to discuss more feelings of belonging and not considering themselves as different in comparison to those from other non-European mixed backgrounds. This may be explained by the existing literature that suggests that differences between cultures have an impact on adaption (Berry, 1997).

The majority of participants discussed not feeling like they belong to either of their cultures, which is synonymous with Vivero and Jenkins (1999) idea of cultural homelessness. This refers to the experience of belonging to more than one culture but not having a home in any. Several participants felt different to their families, and previous findings highlight that multi-ethnic people can be part of differing cultures with conflicting rules and are less likely to feel they have a place to belong (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999).

Participants' accounts highlighted an ambivalence and uncertainty with regards to cultural identity and whether they were really different from the majority trainee group. Participants' ambivalence around their identity may be due to what DuBois (1961 cited in Abu-Rayya, 2006) describes as the phenomenon of 'double-consciousness,' which is an awareness that bicultural individuals possess of being part of a group as well as outside of it (Abu-Rayya, 2006). This may also be due to a less integrated racial identity due to perhaps not processing this as they are part of the white majority. Less integrated identities have been linked to more colour blind attitudes in trainees; the attitude that race does not matter and should be ignored (Gushue & Constantine, 2007). It has also been found that a mismatch in racial identity attitudes between therapists and clients can lead to difficulties in therapy (Helms, 1995 cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007), highlighting clinical implications of trainees' racial identity development. The way white trainees view their racial identity plays a key role in how they deal with issues of diversity on training and in their professional lives (Gushue & Constantine, 2007) and is an aspect that should be attended to on training.

The wish to belong was strong in several of the participants' accounts, and their invisible difference seemed to aid them in integrating into the majority group. Several were torn between this wish to be the same and their feelings of difference. During interviews, interviewees found it difficult to be direct and explicit when they were referring to course staff or peers. At times it was obvious that peers were being referred to but it was rare that peers would be explicitly named. I

wonder if most participants did not want to be seen to 'bad mouth' members of their course, which may have been facilitated by their wish to belong. Statements made that were more negative about course members were often quickly followed by neutralizing statements. This also may have occurred because of trainees shifting from a position of judging to understanding during training (Tan and Campion, 2007). Trainees may be more willing to change or accept aspects due to wanting to understand.

Some participants talked about a need to conceal their difference in order to belong. For several participants the model of acculturation may apply. This states that when adapting to a new environment, individuals strengthen their new identity and so weaken their previous one (Frale, 1997). This is in line with previous research on identity change in training (Tan and Champion, 2007), where minority trainees experience a 'melting pot' phenomena where cultures blend into one (LaFromboise et al, 1993).

Pressure to belong may have been greater for these participants because of their skin colour. The majority of participants integrated well and in some cases assimilation occurred (Berry, 1997). Several participants described losing part of their cultural identity or feeling that they needed to in order to adapt to the majority. Past research has found that those with multiple ethnicities feel they need to change due to not gaining full acceptance in the institutions they must work and study in (Nishimura, 1998 cited in Chaudhari & Pizzolato, 2008). This seems the case for both participants and their peers, who seem to focus more on similarities than differences. Similarities seem important suggesting that commonalities are uniting and so differences are potentially dividing and so better ignored. Alexandra called this "the conflict of training." It is unsurprising as, due to participants' invisible differences, they have been privy to derogatory comments from people who did not recognise their difference, leading them to be less likely to disclose this. Three participants described incidents where colleagues made derogatory comments about ethnicities or joked about cultural differences.

It seems that in adapting to the culture of training, trainees have chosen several different strategies to do so. Some have tried to instigate change (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984 cited in Berry, 1997) through taking on the responsibility of discussing difference and diversity where as others have chosen more of an avoidance strategy (Endler and Parker, 1990 cited in Berry, 1997).

### 7.1.3 Support systems

For the majority of participants their difference goes unnoticed and they reported issues of difference and diversity as not being raised in supervision, both by themselves and supervisors. This seems synonymous with Adetimole et al (2005) reports that few of their supervisors were able to reflect on issues of power and difference. The few participants who did describe instances when difference was raised were those whose difference was more obvious due to their accent. It seems that it is difficult in the clinical psychology profession, as Turpin and Coleman (2010) allude, to train culturally competent psychologists when there are little culturally competent qualified psychologists.

Trainees felt that if more invisible differences were mentioned on training they would feel more comfortable discussing their difference. Several participants felt committed to highlighting issues of difference and diversity in training in general but this seemed dependent on feelings of safety (Shah, 2010). Natalia highlighted conversations of difference and diversity taking place in informal settings but not formal ones.

Much as with identity, it seemed that there was ambivalence and uncertainty around the support that participants felt would be helpful. This is perhaps linked to several participants' feelings about whether their difference counts and also the wish not to be singled out. As highlighted by Alexandra, specific or mentioned support for those from a MWE background might increase perceived legitimacy of MWE individuals' difference. Some felt that they needed more specific support, as one participant wished to access support around cultural issues at the beginning of training but felt unable to use support pinpointed for BME groups, due to not feeling that she fits this category. Several participants discussed definitions of difference and diversity as needing to be broadened and the focus shifted from race. Also, it was felt that discussion of issues and policy needed to be backed up by action and implementation. Some participants discussed different cultural membership and not having support, encouragement or understanding of their profession from their families, highlighting the importance of support on training.

Several participants highlighted a wish to use systems that contain the presence of those from similar backgrounds to themselves and most felt that they would seek support from those similar to them. The current study's finding of safety and comfort in others' difference is one that was also highlighted in Shah's (2010) study. Natalia felt that support provided for BME trainees



might be helpful for those from mixed backgrounds if defined more broadly. Participants also highlighted positive experiences (Shah, 2010) connected with training and Izzie felt that her course considered issues of diversity in a broad sense.

It seems that courses make attempts to address diversity but resistance comes from peers and so more work needs to be done around trainees' views and attitudes to difference. Some participants felt that peers impose silence around the topic. Natalia believed that this response was due to the guilt of the majority white British trainee, as described by Adetimole et al (2005). This then may lead these trainees to ignore differences as oppose to facing such a challenging topic. Several participants highlighted a lack of discussion around ethnicity, even in relation to those who are visibly different. This again points to the need to address white privilege in training (Nolte, 2007). White supervisors also need to be aware of their white privilege in order to aid the prevention of invalidating cultural issues, and offering culturally insensitive treatment recommendation (Constantine and Sue, 2007).

Several participants seemed committed to facing issues and attempt to be explicit about general issues of difference and diversity. For some this is done in relation to others difference but not their own, which highlights the need for training to provide support for those from MWE backgrounds to find ways in which to express their differences. Some participants felt that they might be received negatively if they approached generic support systems due to their difference perhaps not being legitimate. Isis felt that she might be being insensitive to those who have a more visible difference showing the need for a space on training to address these issues. This seems in line with guilt seen by the majority training group; not wishing to discuss difference because of white privilege.

Breaking the silence around difference seems to be one way in which support for those with an invisible difference can begin to be offered. Natalia highlighted this in her participation in this research; she wished to find others who fit a similar ethnic background to her as these experiences are unknown.

Uncertainty felt in other areas was present around working with difference in relation to clients, which several participants expressed. One participant discussed how the appearance of difference might be helpful to clients but also that it might be best for clients to think they were white British. Others saw discussing difference with clients as an opportunity to have rich

conversations about difference. Anya was wary of discussing issues of difference in client work with supervisors, as she thought disclosure of her difference would be appraised negatively by her supervisor. Others wondered what assumptions people, such as supervisors, would make if they discussed their difference and felt exposed, not knowing what would be done with this information. Alexandra specifically worried about this in regards to assessment by supervisors. It seems that with supervisors not addressing issues, trainees then also find this difficult. This points to the importance of ensuring that supervisors address their own biases as they could collude with supervisees' attempts not to address theirs (Constantine and Sue, 2007).

Joanna's experience of derogatory comments made by a colleague highlights the importance of supervisors responsibility to address difference on personal levels (Fleming and Steen, 2004), especially as it has been found that those from mixed backgrounds may also be privy to racism by people who are not aware of their ethnicity (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004).

## **7.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR CLINICAL TRAINING**

The implications of this research for clinical psychology doctorates in the U.K. will be further discussed.

### **7.2.1 Explicitness around difference**

As there is still silence around diversity and difference, clinical psychology trainees from a MWE background seem wary of discussing issues of difference on the course, clinically and in supervision, unsure of whether this is appropriate. If individuals with mixed ethnicities come from a system that celebrates difference they do well (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999), highlighting the need for difference and diversity to be embraced in training.

Participants spoke about concealing their difference pointing to the 'melting pot' phenomena (LaFromboise et al, 1993). This needs more attention in clinical psychology training before all difference melts into the dominant culture, especially as it seems clinical psychology is a culture of its own where those who do not fit need to acculturate. One way this can be addressed is to broaden definitions of difference in order to highlight those that are less visible.

Being explicit about issues of difference and diversity across training may encourage trainees to address these issues and to be less risk adverse. Courses need to ensure issues of diversity are not only being addressed in teaching.

### **7.2.2 Deconstructing white identity and privilege**

White identities and privilege need to be highlighted, encouraging trainees to make the implicit explicit. Since individuals from MWE backgrounds are part of the white majority it is important that trainees have a space to think about their racial identity, as they may not have previously focused upon this. The ambivalence and uncertainty that trainees of a MWE backgrounds experience around their identities seem compounded by their invisible difference. Due to their flexibility and adaptive skills courses need to ensure that an environment is fostered where all differences are considered, including those who are of a white skin colour, to aid prevention of loss of minority culture and preservation of difference. If those from white but diverse backgrounds are overlooked, culturally inept trainees may be produced who would not account for multiracial issues since issues of race and difference are being overlooked. Trainees need to integrate professional values while maintaining their own heritage and culture (Vasquez and McKinley, 1982 cited in Rajan and Shaw, 2008), which does not seem to be occurring. It is important that training aid trainees maintain cultural identities, as the ability to hold support systems in both cultures aids identity development and cultural competence (LaFromboise et al, 1993).

With the impact of appearance and one's racial identity being so significant it seems that more attention to this is needed on clinical psychology training, especially in relation to trainees from a white background. White culture needs to be examined so that trainees can become competent at addressing issues and also begin to see the richness of white cultures rather than assuming all are the same (Nolte 2007). The fact that participants have highlighted peers' focus on similarities as well as their own may point towards the importance of doing this. As Izzie stated, on training she could just be from any white culture. Perhaps if training explored issues of race and racism more then trainees would be less risk adverse. Nolte (2007) recommends that trainees need to think about their own racism and reflect on issues of diversity in a personal manner, as theory can be distancing. This may aid to tackle political correctness, mentioned by Sara, and the fear of offending others. These fears can prevent openness and so may impact upon the development of cultural competence. Nolte (2007) suggests that one way to develop

competence is through membership of diverse groups but the current lack of diversity in clinical psychology makes this difficult (Turpin and Coleman, 2010).

It seems focus should be on celebrating trainees' differences rather than producing a profession of psychologists who feel they need to be the same. One cannot facilitate growth in racial identity beyond that which they have achieved (Helm, 1984 cited in Gushue & Constantine, 2007). This will have important implications for clinical work.

### **7.2.3 Providing support**

Training is already a difficult experience with just under half of trainees experiencing psychological issues when finishing clinical training (Price, 2006 cited in Tan and Campion, 2007) and so MWE individuals need to be supported. Several participants felt different to their families and families did not understand their career or support them highlighting the importance of support on training. It is difficult to know how best to approach this due to the uncertainty and complexity of MWE identity and the way that these individuals approach training. Findings of this study suggesting safety and comfort in others difference points towards a need to begin to increase the recruitment of staff and trainees from all groups in society.

Supervisors need to address diversity issues at a theoretical, clinical and personal level but, if trainees are not trained to address these issues and to see them as important, supervisors may have little effect (Ladany et al, 1997). Also, avoiding cultural issues in supervision could have detrimental effects on clients as supervisees may feel that if these issues are not important in supervision then they are equally unimportant in clinical work (Inman, 2006 cited in Constantine and Sue, 2007). Regardless of ethnic background, if trainees engage in supervision that examines multicultural issues they feel supported and have increased sensitivity (Burkard et al, 2006 cited in Constantine and Sue, 2007). Courses need to ensure that their supervisors are culturally competent and address issues of difference and diversity that are not just visible, no matter the race of their supervisees. Above all, the profession needs to find a way that people who are different to the majority can work in clinical psychology with a sense of belonging and without feeling that they need to compromise their identity.

Training courses need to address how they can aid trainees from MWE backgrounds to deal with the complexities of their difference. It is especially important that we aid trainees to do this

as trainees are entering the profession at a younger age when identity is still being defined and understood (Buchanan and Acevedo, 2004). Access is needed to groups of differing identities by ensuring the availability of placements where trainees access diverse communities (Turpin and Coleman, 2010). This will aid trainees to become more confident and competent with addressing issues of race and difference.

## **7.3 METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

This section will present the strengths and limitations of this study.

### **7.3.1 Owning my perspective**

Throughout this research I have attempted to be transparent about my position in relation to the research topic, as recommended by (Elliot et al, 1999). This is important as it allows the reader to make an informed judgement on that which they are reading. I have acknowledged the role that my assumptions may have played in the findings of this project and have attempted to 'bracket' them throughout the analysis and telling of my participants stories. I have also highlighted my membership to the group being examined in this study and that the stories told of my participants are only my interpretations. To counteract these issues mentioned, I have been transparent with the process of analysis and engaged in reflection both personally, using a reflective journal, with supervisors and with colleagues.

### **7.3.2 Reflections on the research process**

I believe that in considering methodological issues it is important to consider the role I played in this research in order to situate it in its context. I had difficulties with beginning my thesis and came to this project late. This has meant that I have had considerable time constraints in the production of this piece of work. While I have made every effort to ensure the quality of this project through means explored in the method section, I believe that it is important to take this into account.

This research has aided me to develop my cultural identity as a trainee clinical psychologist. It was only in the months prior to coming to my project that I began to think and acknowledge the impact of my MWE identity and also my white privilege. It was through the writing of the

introduction section that I began to come into contact with much of the literature around this subject and so in a sense both my participants and myself went on explorations of identity together.

Throughout this project I have realised my worries about how others might react to this research. I have come into contact with mixed reactions and my worries mirror that of my participant, Isis, in wondering if in talking about the differences of those from a MWE I may be seen as being insensitive to those from a BME background, who have not had the privileges that I and my participants have because of our skin colour. These feelings reflect those of my participants in considering diversity, difference and race as a dangerous and risky topic, one that I feel ill prepared to tackle through the training given to me by my training course. In a sense this has led to me feeling let down but I acknowledge my own responsibility in thinking and taking action around diversity and difference. Without this research I may not have a relationship with this topic.

### **7.3.3 Interviewing peers**

As highlighted in previous sections, there are advantages and disadvantages that come with interviewing peers (Miller and Glassner, 2004). Participants feedback have highlighted the advantage of this in the current research; the feeling of shared understanding facilitating the telling of experiences. It is likely that the more negative feedback on this experience is less likely to be shared and so the impact of my membership to the participant group cannot be fully known. In regards to analyzing interviews my shared membership may have lead to assumptions on my part, as I could have attended more to shared experiences than others. Every effort has been made to ensure this is not the case through credibility checks, discussed in the method section.

### **7.3.4 The sample**

IPA's requirements were complied with in regards to a homogenous sample through the recruitment of participants who self identified as being from a MWE background. A limitation in regards to this could be said to be the variety of cultural backgrounds that participants derived from. This is a difficulty of studying those from mixed backgrounds and a possible reason for limited research, due to the high levels of variations seen within groups making them difficult to

define (Vivero and Jenkins, 1999). This may have implications for the transferability of the findings reported in this study. Even so, participants had convergent as well as divergent experiences and both were presented (Smith et al, 2009).

The homogeneity of the sample was further preserved by the recruitment of female participants only. However, this is also a potential limitation to the study. This is representative of clinical psychology due to the lack of males in the profession and may also reflect the lack of males from groups other than white British. Also, men from MWE backgrounds may be doubly disadvantaged in training, as by virtue of being male it has been reported that they need to adapt to gain credibility in the profession (Caswell and Baker, 2007). This may mean that they do not wish to highlight their difference further. This has meant that issues of gender in relation to those from a MWE background have not been able to be considered.

It is also appropriate to consider the reasons behind participants volunteering for this study. It may be that they were motivated to take part due to being affected by their background or that they felt more comfortable discussing these issues.

Although caution should be maintained at all times when discussing qualitative research due to small sample sizes leading to limited generalisability, this study has a relatively large sample size for an IPA study allowing for more confidence in the results of the study. I also analysed each interview individually rather than employing the strategy where several are analysed and themes used as a template to analyse the rest. This perhaps points towards a preserved richness of data, although this led to needing to preserve some themes over others. To address this I systematically followed IPA guidelines and maintained a dialogue with my supervisor (Smith et al, 2009). IPA was also an appropriate method for analyzing the data due to its allowance of detailed exploration of individual experiences. These experiences were able to be explored without the constraint of being limited to existing knowledge and theory (Smith et al, 2009).

#### **7.4 AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

It is recommended that this research be replicated to enhance the validity of these findings. This is especially important due to the limited literature in general on those from a mixed background, as well as a MWE background. Research could be conducted to examine the impact of year of

training on trainees experiences and needs to look at the experiences of male trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. Also, given the lack of research on those from white ethnic backgrounds, further research examining the views of the majority white British trainee in regards to experiences of issues of diversity would also be pertinent.

The findings of this research only specified that participants be from a MWE background. We do not know how this experience may interplay with those from a MWE background who are also from marginalised groups such as, Gay and Lesbian individuals or those who are affiliated with a specific religious or spiritual group. The themes identified in this research may resonate with these other marginalised groups in training whose difference is not visible. Research examining these groups for similarities and differences would be important, especially as trainees from any marginalised group are likely to find it difficult to discuss and highlight issues of diversity.

The majority of participants in the current study expressed mixed feelings in regards to difference and diversity, which have also been found in trainees when dealing with issues of spirituality (Mills, 2010). Interestingly, Mills (2010) found that trainees felt comfortable addressing issues of sexuality and ethnicity, highlighting the need for more in depth research in both areas to examine factors that facilitate different levels of comfort in addressing issues of difference. Participants in the current research also spoke of the hidden nature that the topic of difference and diversity still holds, which seems to be the case in regards to other invisible differences that are not being given attention on training, such as sexuality (Daniel et al, 2004). Also, trainees in the current study discussed the risk associated with the topic of difference and it seems that some trainees might be afraid of how they might be viewed if they discuss race. Some did not disclose issues in supervision which is in line with findings around the reluctance of trainees to disclose other invisible differences, such as sexuality in supervision, as they fear negative evaluations (Ladany et al, 1996). Future studies need to explore barriers to discussing issues of invisible differences (Prest et al, 1999) and examine in more depth why invisible differences are not being disclosed and how we can facilitate the disclosure and further discussion of these.

Studies looking at the experiences of MWE individuals in relation to different aspects of the profession of clinical psychology would be useful. These could consider, for example, the experiences of clinical psychologists from a MWE background in supervisory roles as well as training roles. This groups openness and responsiveness to issues of diversity and difference in



regards to supervision and client work would provide useful information to an area with limited findings.

The findings of this study in regards to uncertainty around disclosure and use of difference in the therapeutic relationship may be an area that needs further exploration, in order to aid understanding in the development of culturally competent practitioners.

Research examining the interplay between theoretical standpoints, philosophies, diversity and the training experience is also needed. This is in regards to course philosophies and individual adherence to particular theoretical positions such as, feminism.

## **7.5 CONCLUSIONS**

This project presents a qualitative study using IPA methodology to facilitate the exploration of the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background. The study makes contribution to an area of sparse research. The accounts given here do not speak for all trainee clinical psychologists from a MWE background but findings summarise the rich experiences explored adding to the evidence base.

Trainee clinical psychologists from MWE backgrounds have complex cultural identities and use a number of strategies to negotiate training. This includes their flexibility and adaption skills that come from being bicultural and multi-ethnic. These skills aid them to integrate into the majority white British training group as does their white skin colour. This can lead to others forgetting and not acknowledging their difference. Assumptions of similarities are made which may lead to a loss of culture as integration occurs and even forgetting and denying parts of ones identity. MWE individuals can feel uncertain about their difference, as they are different but perhaps not different enough to be considered so.

Participants membership of the majority as well as the minority group leads to uncertainty about their differences as well as support systems accessed and needed. Their invisible difference leads to supervisors not addressing issues of diversity even though they can be privy to derogatory remarks from those that do not realise their difference. The exception in regards to supervision comes when those from MWE backgrounds who have an aspect that gives their difference away, such as an accent.

Some trainees report their courses as attempting to highlight issues of difference but resistance comes from peers. Several participants were committed to highlighting issues of diversity but not in relation to themselves and race and diversity was connected with a sense of risk and danger.

Trainees used their difference in clinical work to aid understanding of clients and training aided these individuals to have an increased awareness of difference and diversity.

The findings have implications for clinical training courses in the U.K. and highlight the need for the acknowledgement and validation of this group of trainee clinical psychologists' difference.

## **7.6 FINAL REFLECTION**

This research has taken me on a journey that has led to many personal realisations. I feel that I have come full circle and so I end with my opening quote. I continue my effort to piece together my different identities and this project has allowed me to collect a few more of those pieces.

'Being human is an endless effort to collect our distributed selves from all the locations where they are scattered forging them into a more coherent account of who we are' (Di Nicola, 1997).

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## 9. APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

University of  
Hertfordshire



### University of Hertfordshire **Doctorate in Clinical Psychology**

#### FINAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### **1) Can you tell me a bit about yourself?**

Prompt: Your ethnicity  
Your cultural background  
Has this changed over time? Why might this be?

#### Identity

#### **1. How do you feel about being a trainee from a mixed white background?**

#### **2. Can you tell me about any challenges you might have faced in making the choice to do clinical psychology training?**

Prompts: How does your family view your training?  
Family commitments and obligations  
Cultural beliefs about women working  
Family's view of psychological distress or working with certain client groups.

#### **3. How do you think your training has influenced your identity?**

Prompt: Do you see yourself now as different from before you began training?  
How would you say you have changed?

- 4. How has training influenced your beliefs or behaviour in your personal life and how might this be related to being a trainee from a mixed background?**

Prompt: What about how other people see you; members of family, friends?

### **Influences of background on training experiences**

- 5. What has been your experience on your course of being from a mixed background?**
- 6. In what way has being from a mixed background impacted on your relationships with other people in training?**

Prompts: Supervisors  
Clients  
Peers  
Other colleagues

- 7. How do you think these people view your ethnicity?**

Prompt: Any specific examples you could share

- 8. How might have being from a mixed background influenced the way you have approached course work?**

Prompt: Any specific examples

### **Strengths and limitations**

- 9. Can you tell me about any specific strengths/resources that come with the position of being a trainee from a mixed white background?**



**10. Can you tell me about any specific limitations/dilemmas that come with the position of being a trainee from a mixed background?**

**Support**

**11. On a day to day basis how do you deal with being a trainee, especially in relation to your mixed white background?**

**12. Can you tell me about ways in which you manage any difficulties or dilemmas related to ethnicity that might arise on training?**

Prompts: In lectures, on placement

**13. Are you aware of any support structures available to you in relation to your training?**

Prompt: Via university  
Workplace  
Other organisations

**14. What kind of support would you like to see put in place or that you think would be helpful for Trainee Clinical Psychologists from mixed white backgrounds?**

**Experience of interview**

**15. What has this interview been like for you?**

**16. Is there anything that you would like to talk about which you feel we haven't covered in this interview?**

## APPENDIX 2: EMAIL TO COURSE DIRECTORS

Doctor of Clinical Psychology Training Course  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield  
Herts  
AL10 9AB

Dear.....

My name is Nermin Murat and I am currently undertaking a Doctoral Training in Clinical Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire. I am a final year trainee who is undertaking a major research project examining the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white background. I am contacting you to ask for your permission to contact the trainees on your course. I will do this via email which I will ask your course administrator to send to all of your current trainees.

In carrying out my research I hope to gain insight and understanding in to the experiences of trainees from a mixed white background. Within this group diversity and difference are often hidden and, at times, forgotten. I am hoping that this study will help those who provide training to gain a more in-depth understanding of the needs of trainees whose diversity may not be obvious and so facilitate the provision of support for this group.

I wish to recruit 6 to 8 trainee clinical psychologists from mixed white backgrounds to participate in this study. This will involve participation in a semi-structured interview of approximately 1-1 ½ hours in length at a location convenient to them. I have gained ethical approval from the University of Hertfordshire ethics committee (registration protocol number PSY/02/11/NM) and will be supervised by Dr Pieter W Nel, tutor at the University of Hertfordshire.

Participation would be confidential and I will not be informing courses of those who have participated in this research. I will only breach confidentiality if it is disclose that the participant or any other person is at risk.

I hope you will consider your course's participation in this project.

Please do not hesitate to contact me on the email or telephone number below should you have any questions.

Thank you for your time,

Yours Sincerely

Nermin Murat  
Trainee Clinical Psychologist  
**Email:** [n.murat2@herts.ac.uk](mailto:n.murat2@herts.ac.uk)  
**Telephone:** 07854334223  
**Postal address:** as above

### APPENDIX 3: EMAIL TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

Doctor of Clinical Psychology Training Course  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield  
Herts  
AL10 9AB

Dear Trainee,

My name is Nermin Murat and I am currently undertaking my Doctoral training in Clinical Psychology, at the University of Hertfordshire. As part of my training I am undertaking a major research project looking at the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white background and as such I am looking for volunteers to take part in my study (Protocol number: PSY/02/11/NM).

In completing this project I hope to develop insight and understanding into how those from a mixed white background experience differing aspects of training in the hope that training courses will use this to adapt in order to meet the needs of this group of trainees.

I am looking to recruit 6-8 trainee clinical psychologists who identify themselves as from a mixed white background. This means that at least one parent must be born outside of the U.K.

It is completely up to you whether you wish to participate in this study. If you do participate this will be kept confidential. This means that I will not inform your university of your participation. The only time I would break this confidentiality is if you informed me that you or some one else are at risk.

With this email you will find attached a research information sheet explaining the study more fully. If after reading the information sheet you would like to take part or if you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me by either phone or email:

**Email:** n.murat2@herts.ac.uk

**Telephone:** 07854334223

**Postal address:** as above

Thank you for your time.

Yours Sincerely,

Nermin Murat  
Trainee Clinical Psychologist

University of Hertfordshire  
**Doctorate in Clinical Psychology**

**INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPANTS**

**Research Title:** Invisible diversity: exploring the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white ethnic background (PSY/02/11/NM).

**Introduction**

You are invited to take part in a research study exploring the personal experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white background. Before you decide whether you would like to give consent to take part, please take the time to read the following information which I have written to help you understand why the research is being carried out and what it will involve.

If there is anything that is unclear, or if you would like more information, then please contact the researcher Nermin Murat MSc (Trainee Clinical Psychologist), email [n.murat2@herts.ac.uk](mailto:n.murat2@herts.ac.uk), telephone 07854 334223.

**The researchers**

The study is being carried out by Nermin Murat MSc, Trainee Clinical Psychologist, as part of a Doctoral qualification in Clinical Psychology. The study is supervised by Dr. Pieter W Nel, Chartered Clinical Psychologist.

**What is the purpose of the study?**

This research is interested in finding out about the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white background who are currently undergoing a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology training program in the U.K. There has been little research detailing the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from diverse backgrounds and ethnic minorities. A better understanding of these individuals' experiences on training has potential implications for the way in which training and support from these courses are provided. This study aims to explore this area in a way that allows trainees space to discuss issues that are important to them, rather than imposing a fixed agenda. Trainees who are from a mixed white background may be in a position where their difference and diversity are hidden and, at times, forgotten. I believe that it is important to give this group of trainees a platform from which to discuss their experiences of training on clinical doctorate courses where interview and admission processes seem to

favour White British candidates. I believe this research provides an opportunity for courses to learn and adapt accordingly to trainees from diverse backgrounds that may not fit the stereotypical trainee profile.

### **What is involved?**

If you decide that you would like to take part I will ask you a few questions to determine whether you meet the research criteria. This will involve several questions about both you and your parents ethnic background. You will be asked to sign a consent form and invited to participate in an interview concerning your experience. The interview will take about an hour to an hour and a half. The interview will take place at a location convenient to you or at the University of Hertfordshire. Any travel expenses, within reason, that you incur in order to travel to the venue where the interview is to take place will be paid.

During this time we will discuss your experiences of undergoing training in clinical psychology, how you view yourself and whether this has altered during training, how you have dealt with issues that might arise involving difference and how you have been supported by your training course. All interviews will be tape recorded and later transcribed verbatim, after which the tape will be wiped.

### **Who is taking part?**

This study will include approximately 6-8 trainee clinical psychologists who identify themselves as originating from a mixed white background, where one of their parents are from a country other than the United Kingdom. Trainees will be currently studying for a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology at a U.K institution.

### **Do I have to take part?**

No. If you do not want to take part, or you change your mind during your participation in this study, you can withdraw and you do not need to give a reason. Participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw up until the research is written up.

### **Will taking part be confidential?**

Yes. If you agree to take part in the study your information will be kept confidential. Your Universities will not be informed of your participation. The overall findings of the project may be published in a research paper; if your stories are used in the research I will conceal your identity by, for example, changing names and recognisable details. If during the interview I have serious concerns about harm to yourself or the safety of others I am compelled by my duty of care to inform others.

### **What if there is a problem?**

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak with Nermin Murat who will do her best to answer your questions. If there is a difficulty at any time appropriate support will be offered to you from Nermin Murat. You will be given a debrief sheet which will have information on where to go/who to contact should you experience any difficulties after the interview.

**What will happen to the results of the study?**

The results will be written up as a thesis for the requirements of the University of Hertfordshire's Doctorate in Clinical Psychology. It is also hoped that the study will be written up and published in a psychological journal. No participants will be identifiable in written or published material.

**Who has reviewed this study?**

This study was reviewed by University of Hertfordshire Research Ethics Committee and was given ethical approval. The Registration Protocol Number is **PSY/02/11/NM**

**How do I get involved?**

If after reading this information sheet you would like to take part in the research or would like any further information then please contact me on either [n.murat2@herts.ac.uk](mailto:n.murat2@herts.ac.uk), 07854334223 or using the postal address:

Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Training Course  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield, Herts., AL10 9AB

If you decide to take part in the study, I will contact you to arrange a suitable time and place to meet. You will be given a copy of this information sheet and a signed consent form to keep. You will also be given a de-briefing sheet, with helpful contacts on should you wish to discuss any issues that might arise for you through participating in this interview.

Thank you for taking time to read this information sheet.

Nermin Murat

Trainee Clinical Psychologist, University of Hertfordshire

## APPENDIX 5: PARTICIPANT SCREENING

University of  
Hertfordshire



### University of Hertfordshire Doctorate in Clinical Psychology

#### SCREENING TOOL

#### STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL:

#### Participant Screening.

All participants will be asked the following questions to screen for inclusion and exclusion criteria of the study.

Was verbal consent obtained from the potential participant before asking the questions below?

Yes/No

#### 1) What is your ethnic group?

*Please mark the appropriate box to indicate your ethnic group.*

##### **A White**

- ☐ British
  - ☐ Any Other White background, *please write in*
- 

##### **B Mixed**

- ☐ White and Black Caribbean
  - ☐ White and Black African
  - ☐ White and Asian
  - ☐ Any Other Mixed background, *please write in*
- 

##### **C Asian or Asian British**

- ☐ Indian
- ☐ Pakistani
- ☐ Bangladeshi
- ☐ Any Other Asian background, *please write in*

---

**D Black or Black British**

- ☐ Caribbean
- ☐ African
- ☐ Any Other Black background, *please write in*

---

**E Chinese or other ethnic group**

- ☐ Chinese
- ☐ Any Other, *please write in*

---

**1) What is your country of birth?**

- ☐ England
- ☐ Wales
- ☐ Scotland
- ☐ Northern Ireland
- ☐ Republic of Ireland
- ☐ Elsewhere, *please write in the present name of the country*

---

**2) In what country was your mother born?**

---

**3) In what country was your father born?**

---

**4) How would you describe your gender?**

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Transgender

---



5) Age: \_\_\_\_\_

6) What year of training are you in? \_\_\_\_\_

*Thank you for your time*

## APPENDIX 6: CONSENT FORM

University of  
Hertfordshire



University of Hertfordshire  
**Doctorate in Clinical Psychology**  
**Participant Consent Form**

**Title of Project:** Invisible diversity: exploring the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white ethnic background (**Protocol Number: PSY/02/11/NM**).

**Researcher:** Nermin Murat: Trainee Clinical Psychologist

*Please initial box*

- 1) I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information and if needed ask questions that were satisfactorily answered.
- 2) I understand that participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time until the point that the research is written up (approximately May 2011), without giving any reason.
- 3) I understand that the information I provide will be anonymised for the use of the study.
- 4) I have been informed that I have the right to a de-brief following completion of the research study.
- 5) I agree to take part in the above study

☐☐☐☐☐

.....  
Name of participant

.....  
Date

.....  
Signature

.....  
Name of researcher

.....  
Date

.....  
Signature

## APPENDIX 7: DEBRIEF SHEET

University of  
Hertfordshire

University of Hertfordshire  
**Doctorate in Clinical Psychology**  
**DEBRIEFING INFORMATION SHEET**  
**(PSY/02/11/NM)**

Thank you very much for making this study possible.

You have now completed your interview where I asked you about your experiences training on a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology course. I particularly asked you about any changes to your identity and sense of self that may or may not have occurred since undergoing the course. I asked you about a range of experiences that you may have encountered on training and how you have dealt with issues that might have arisen involving difference. I also asked about how you feel you have been supported by your training course.

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists from a mixed white background in order to aid training courses understanding of how this group of trainees experience training. This study aimed to explore the support this group experiences with the hope that changes, if needed, can be made by Doctorate in Clinical Psychology courses. The study also aimed to explore any possible impact training may have on identity. There has been little research detailing the experiences of trainee clinical psychologists whose diversity and difference may be hidden or less obvious and it may be that a better understanding of this group's experience has potential implications across all areas of clinical psychology training. This study aimed to explore these implications.

If you have any questions about the study you can contact me on:

Email address: [n.murat2@herts.ac.uk](mailto:n.murat2@herts.ac.uk)

Telephone number: 07854334223

Postal address: Doctorate in Clinical Psychology Training Course  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield, Herts., AL10 9AB

Sometimes talking about your experiences can stir up emotions. If you need to talk to somebody about any difficulties, or worries that you might have, some of the information below might be useful for you. Please also think about contacting your external supervisor, if you have one, and/or your GP.

**Mindinfo**line: 0845 766 0163

[info@mind.org.uk](mailto:info@mind.org.uk)

Mindinfo

PO Box 277

Manchester

M60 3XN

**SANE**line: 0845 767 8000

**Samaritans**: 08457 90 90 90

[jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org)

## **APPENDIX 8: LETTER OF ETHICAL APPROVAL**

**APPENDIX 9a : AUDIT TRAIL – ANONYMISED EXAMPLE TRANSCRIPT AND ANALYSIS OF THEMES (PARTICIPANT 1 - ISIS)**

Emergent Themes	Original Transcript	Exploratory Comments
<b>Complex cultural identity</b>	<p><b><u>Interview 1</u></b></p> <p><b>Speaker key</b></p> <p>IV Interviewer IE Interviewee</p> <p>IV So, um, I guess just to start off with, um, can you just tell me a bit about yourself?</p> <p>IE Um, okay, so I'm 24, nearly 25 on Thursday. Um, I'm originally from... well, complicated, ah, story in terms of how I've ended up back in England, um, but, yeah, my parents are essentially from, um, X and X, um, and they, sort of, in their travels with, kind of, getting to live around the world and stuff, they, they, sort of, met each other in England, um, started a relationship at that point in time and, ah, my sister was born and then about two and a half years later I was born, um, and then they decided to go back to Africa, so they, sort of, they had, sort of, previously lived when they were growing up, um, in Africa and they went back there. So, essentially from about the, I don't know, about seven or eight months old I've been living in Africa, um, yeah, um, lived there until I was about 11 and then we moved to X and then we moved back to Africa when I was about 12, [laughs] yeah, we only</p>	<p>Key: Descriptive Linguistic Conceptual</p> <p>The story of her background is complicated.</p> <p>Hesitant (um, ah, repetition) when telling story of background - indicating uncertainty.</p> <p>Her parents are from X and X and met in England.</p> <p>Her parents travelled a lot.</p> <p>She has a sister who is two and a half years older than her.</p> <p>She moved to... Africa when she was 7/8 months old.</p> <p>She has lived in different parts of South Africa.</p> <p>Laughter – uncertainty about how her story will be received?</p>

<b>Complex cultural identity</b>	<p>stayed there for a year, and then I think after that I, I spent about, yeah, sort of, maybe three or four more years in Africa, and then we came to, came to England in, sort of, 2001, so yeah little bit, complicated story but that's, yeah, yeah, that's a bit.</p> <p>IV Yeah, okay. And how do you feel about being a trainee from your background?</p>	<p>The story of her background is complicated.</p>
<b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b>	<p>IE Um, I think it's quite interesting because I suppose I'm quite interested in, sort of, cultural issues in, in psychology. Um, I think just having had experiences of living in lots of different cultures and so obviously Africa they're, sort of, you know, Afrikaans African, and English Africans and there's also, sort of, um, a lot of black African people and, um, Indian Africans, and there's lots of different types of people. Um, so, you know, that was really interesting for me and, sort of, going to school and just being around lots of people from different ethnic backgrounds. I'm quite interested in, sort of, cross cultural issues and, um, in terms of, sort of, being a trainee, I think it's helpful having had experiences of living in different cultures and, sort of, having to integrate within, within them. I think it's made me sensitive</p>	<p>She is interested in cultural issues.</p> <p>Repetition of interesting.</p>
<b>Exposure to difference</b>		<p>She has been exposed to lots of different cultures growing up.</p>
<b>Exposure to difference</b>		
<b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b>		<p>Growing up with people from different backgrounds was interesting.</p>
<b>Exposure to difference</b>		
<b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b>		<p>Experiences of living and integrating with different cultures has been interesting and helpful to being a trainee making her more sensitive to cultural issues.</p>
<b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b>		
<b>Sensitivity to</b>		<p>Repetition of interesting and cultural issues – what does this mean specifically? Cultural issues</p>

<b>culture</b>	to cultural issues. So, I think, coming from my background it's quite, it's quite interesting and helpful to, to being a trainee. But I think at the same time, um, because I came here when I was about 15 I think, so I've spent, I've spent more time in Africa than I have in England, but I think because I came at that age my accent isn't as strong anymore so people don't necessarily know that I'm not, um, I'm not, sort of, originally from, from England. Ah, so I think that that gets lost sometimes so, so I think, I think occasionally when, um, when there might be issues being discussed I might have a particular view on something that I think is different from other people and then I feel like I need to explain, you know, I need to explain, sort of like, my experiences in Africa as to why that is that I might have a different view to other people on certain issues.	are important but perhaps there is an uncertainty or a difficulty in articulating exactly why this might be.
<b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b>		
<b>Hidden difference</b>		Came to England when 15 so her accent isn't as strong anymore so people don't know that she's not from England.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		People are unaware of a big part of her identity – a big part of her is hidden.
<b>Lack of knowledge, understanding &amp; awareness</b>		Where she is from gets lost sometimes.
<b>Need to explain self</b>		Part of her is lost/gets lost?
<b>Self as different from others</b>		People don't fully understand her?
		She needs to explain myself and my experiences in Africa when I have a different view to others.
		Repetition of explain.
		She is constantly having to explain who she is.
	So, I think, for example, I don't know what we were talking about, um, in one of the lectures we were talking about, um, a particular, ah, questioning style to help people identify what their beliefs are, um, and how you can, kind of, talk about where the beliefs came from and, you know, how helpful it is. Um, I can't remember... I can't... I think it's CMC, I	
		Use of language indicating uncertainty about what she is describing.



<p><b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p> <p><b>Need to explain self to others</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Need to explain self to others</b></p> <p><b>Self as different to others</b></p> <p><b>Culture as</b></p>	<p>can't remember what that stands for, so bad don't pay attention to teaching.</p> <p>Anyway besides that, um, we then had to do a role play on it, um, and I suppose one of my beliefs was, um, about always needing to be the best at everything that you do, and so I had to go to quite a... I mean, that conversation was helpful but just... I think it, sort of, um, illustrated the types of conversations I regularly have to have with people so we, kind of, went through and said, where did that come from, okay, Africa, academic, sort of, um, achievement is a massive thing, if you don't do well you don't, you know, you don't pass the year and then you have to stay behind and redo the year again. It's, kind of like, you know, having to have that conversation was really quite helpful and I think the other trainees were... who, who were in the group with us were, like, I would've never realised that, I wouldn't have, you know, realised that that was the way things are in Africa, blah-blah-blah, um, so but I found... find... obviously that was for the role play but I find myself having those sorts of conversations with people quite regularly in terms of explaining why it is that I might, sort of, view things in a particular way or have a slightly different slant on things, sort of bringing in</p>	<p>Perhaps she thinks I will judge her for not remembering/known terminology or paying attention to her teaching.</p> <p>"Anyway" – dismissing what she just said?</p> <p>She's fed up of having to explain her beliefs but perhaps feels she has to balance these more negative feelings with a positive spin – it "was helpful."</p> <p>Use of "okay" is almost indicating 'here we go again.'</p> <p>One of her beliefs is around always needing to be the best at everything you do. She has to explain this belief to others by saying that in Africa academic achievement is important and that if you don't pass a year then you have to redo it. Having these types of conversations are useful to her and other trainees in her group would not have known this.</p> <p>A part of her identity is very hidden.</p> <p>"Blah, blah, blah" – is this indicating how bored she is of having to explain her cultural identity and country.</p>
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<p><b>interesting and helpful</b></p> <p><b>Self as different to others</b></p> <p><b>Lack of knowledge, understanding &amp; awareness</b></p> <p><b>Others assumptions</b></p>	<p>my experiences, which is interesting but, um, I think sometimes if people didn't ask me they would find it quite... they might find it strange that I have a slightly different view without understanding where it comes from because they just assume that I'm from... I think people make the assumption that I'm, that I'm from... that I'm English, British.</p> <p>IV And, um, is there any more that you can say about, um, your, kind of, culture getting lost? You just mentioned, it just struck me when you said it's lost.</p>	<p>People don't understand her and think she is strange. In order to try and control for this she discloses her ethnic origin.</p> <p>"Strange" – she's a stranger in this country? She finds herself regularly having to explain why she views things in a certain way, which is different to others, and brings in her experiences.</p> <p>If people didn't ask her they would find her different views strange without understanding where they come from.</p> <p>People make the assumption that she is English, British.</p>
<p><b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p>	<p>IE Yeah, so I think, I think it's mainly because there's... it's quite interesting because there's another, um, African, ah, person on our course who's a few years older than me and, um, their accent is still quite strong so I think sometimes when they, sort of, talk about things I think it's more obvious to people that perhaps what they're saying or, um, what they're talking about may be influenced by their</p>	<p>Use of the word interesting perhaps masks deeper, more difficult feelings.</p>
<p><b>Comparing self to others</b></p>	<p>I think it's more obvious to people that perhaps what they're saying or, um, what they're talking about may be influenced by their African background, whereas I think with me, because I've lost my accent more than, than other people have, um, they don't necessarily, ah, pick up on that. Um, so I think, yeah, I suppose it does... I suppose my</p>	<p>Does she wish she had a stronger accent – envy?</p> <p>Accent = visible difference.</p> <p>There is another person on her course who is African and has a strong accent so it is more obvious that their views are influenced by their African background.</p>
<p><b>Comparing self to others</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>African background is quite,</p>	<p>"Lost" may indicate more than just a loss of accent but perhaps a loss of self. "Lost my accent more than others" indicates that she compares herself to others from Africa and maybe other cultures.</p> <p>Because she has lost her accent people don't realise where she is from.</p>
<p><b>Importance of</b></p>		

<b>cultural identity</b>	um, important to me and I, yeah, I suppose I do feel that it gets lost sometimes. I suppose, I don't know, maybe when we have discussions about... lectures about cultural issues we have, sort of, quite a few good lectures on difference and diversity. I find that a good opportunity to, kind of, bring in my own experiences but because there's so many of us on our course I don't necessarily feel that everybody gets the opportunity to, to get that information from me, to, to understand it in that way. Um, so yeah, I just think there's too many people and my accent's not strong enough to, you know, to give some sort of suggestion that that might be, um, where I'm from. I suppose I'm just thinking of other people on our course who like, you know, some people... somebody... you know, someone from Australia and another person from Germany, um, I think if your accent isn't as strong or, sort of, doesn't give an indication that that is where you're, um, where you're from then people might just make the assumption that you're British and just assume that perhaps the way that you're describing things and talking about things is just to do with, that there... there, there isn't anything else behind that. Yeah.	Her African background is important to her and she feels it gets lost sometimes.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		She has quite a few good lectures on difference and diversity which she finds are good opportunities to bring in her experiences. Does she feel lost in her cohort? As there are so many trainees, not everybody gets to hear about her background and to understand her in relation to it.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		There are too many people in her cohort for her to be truly understood?
<b>Comparing self to others</b>		There are too many people on her training and her accent is not strong enough for people to know her cultural background.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		She is thinking about others on her course from different backgrounds. Perhaps compares her self to these people or feels they are allies if their accents aren't strong.
<b>Others assumptions</b>		If your accent is not strong or doesn't give an indication of where you are from people just assume you are British and that there is nothing else behind what you are saying.
<b>Others assumptions</b>		She feels people judge her from her appearance.
		"Anything else behind that" indicates peoples surface level understanding of her?

<p><b>Uncertainty</b></p> <p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>IV      You spoke about accent, I'm just wondering in relation to appearance.</p> <p>IE      Yeah. I suppose in terms of, um, in terms of appearance... I suppose people don't... I do have a lot of people asking, perhaps not on, not within our cohort but other trainees that I've met from other courses asking me what, what, sort of, typical African people are like. Um, I suppose... I don't know. I don't know if I look like a typical African person or not. Um, yeah, I suppose people probably wouldn't be able to tell the difference. They would... I don't suppose if I, if I was to line up, um, a, sort of, load of white African people and white British people, I don't know that we'd necessarily be able to definitely tell the difference, only that in Africa there might be more sun so people might be slightly more tanned [laugh] as in if they'd been on holiday, but, um, I don't know that people would necessarily by looking at me people wouldn't know that I'm from Africa and that's certainly been my experience. Like there are some African people where I, where I'm on</p> <p>placement and when I've</p>	<p>Trainees from other courses ask her what typical African people look like.</p> <p>People want to put her in a box; categorise her and see how she measures up to other Africans?</p> <p>She doesn't know if she looks like a typical African. Does this indicate an uncertainty about her cultural identity or maybe she no longer knows if she is a typical African?</p> <p>People probably can't tell the difference between white African and white British people except that white Africans might be more tanned.</p> <p>People don't see her</p> <p>Laugh?</p> <p>People don't know that I'm from Africa.</p> <p>Even her own people don't recognise her anymore.</p>
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<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>said, oh, I'm from Africa, they go, oh are you really? Um, I mean, I recognise them because obviously of their accent, but maybe if I was just to see them, um, I wouldn't necessarily have known that they were African. I think white African and white British people pretty much look the same so, I would say that they look similar.</p> <p>IV And what do, kind of, think about that or feel about that, that you, you know, that people wouldn't be able to tell if... that you were from Africa just by looking at you or maybe can't see you're different?</p> <p>IE Hmm. I suppose in some ways... yeah, I wonder. I think sometimes people might, for example, if you were to see clients, if they perhaps just had the assumption that you were white British, um, that might, that might be helpful for them, um, some people favour white British and they could identify with you because they assumed that you were white British as well, that might, sort of, help I suppose in some ways with a therapeutic alliance, um, but then I think... You know, I suppose I'm thinking of one particular client who, um, who's from another culture and feels that because they're from another culture</p>	<p>People on her placement who are from Africa are surprised that she is African. She recognises them because of their accents but if she was to just see them she wouldn't necessarily know that they were from Africa.</p> <p>Assumptions that if you look the same then you are the same.</p> <p>White British and white African people look similar.</p>
<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Similarities as advantage</b></p> <p><b>Difference as disadvantage</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>It might be helpful for clients to have the assumption that you are white British.</p> <p>It's helpful for client and therapist to be from the same background or for clients to assume you are Is it unhelpful for clients to think a therapist is from a different background?</p> <p>People identify with those who are similar. Some people favour white British and could identify with you because they assume that you are white British as well. This might help with the therapeutic alliance.</p> <p>Assumption that similar cultural backgrounds of client and therapist increase therapeutic alliance.</p>	

<p><b>Hidden difference Responsibility and appropriate disclosure of culture</b></p>	<p>that, um, they're at a disadvantage to, sort of, um, the people that they work with, the people they work with are mainly white British, um, I think they feel quite alone and then sometimes I feel as though I can't say, well, you know, just because you're from another culture doesn't mean you're more disadvantaged knowing I'm from another culture. I would never be able to say that and she wouldn't necessarily be able to know that I'm not, um, I'm not British. Um, so maybe if it was more obvious in your appearance you might, sort of, be able to identify that people with differences can still get somewhere, if it was more obvious that you were from a particular culture, maybe. I don't know.</p>	<p>She works with a client that is from another culture who feels they are at a disadvantage in relation to the people that they work with, who are mainly white British. Is she also referring to herself here? She thinks that they feel quite alone but can't say, since she is also from another culture, this isn't true. She would never be able to say this and her client would not necessarily know that she is not white British. Maybe if it was more obvious from your appearance that you are from a different culture you might be able to identify that people with differences can still get somewhere.</p>
<p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Difference as advantage &amp; disadvantage</b></p> <p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>that, um, they're at a disadvantage to, sort of, um, the people that they work with, the people they work with are mainly white British, um, I think they feel quite alone and then sometimes I feel as though I can't say, well, you know, just because you're from another culture doesn't mean you're more disadvantaged knowing I'm from another culture. I would never be able to say that and she wouldn't necessarily be able to know that I'm not, um, I'm not British. Um, so maybe if it was more obvious in your appearance you might, sort of, be able to identify that people with differences can still get somewhere, if it was more obvious that you were from a particular culture, maybe. I don't know.</p>	<p>Verbally disclosing cultural identity to clients is wrong.</p> <p>Appearing non-white British discloses a therapists' difference to clients. Clients knowing that their therapist is non-white British can be helpful and/or encouraging to them if they are also non-white British. "I don't know" perhaps indicates uncertainty about this. Maybe hasn't had enough time opportunities to think about these issues previously.</p>
<p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>IV Why do you feel you can't say that in, in session?</p> <p>IE I don't, um... I suppose there's issues around self-disclosure I suppose and then I... Yeah, I think if people could, you know, I don't know, yeah, if it was more obvious from your appearance it would be, um, it would then just be something that was implicit in the, in the session and it wouldn't need to be mentioned. It feels out of place to mention it I suppose. It wouldn't seem as though it was a natural part of, um, the</p>	<p>"It feels out of place" to talk about culture/therapists culture?</p> <p>There are issues around disclosure. If your difference was more obvious from your appearance then you wouldn't have to say anything about your difference. It wouldn't need to be mentioned in the session. It feels out of place to mention your background. It would not seem a natural part of the work they were doing.</p>

<b>Responsibility &amp; appropriate disclosure of culture</b>	work that we were doing. So, um, yeah, I think in some cases it might be, ah, yeah, it's a shame, I suppose, that's probably the way that I describe it, that it's a shame that you can't necessarily... you wouldn't necessarily know, um, where you're from. And I suppose, like, I don't know, maybe when I first moved to England people maybe had the assumption that, that, um, just school children had the assumption that everybody from Africa was from a black background, and so I suppose they would consider it, like, oh my gosh, are you really from Africa, but you're white, how is that possible that you're from Africa. Um, so I think... I don't know, sometimes I'm unsure of how much people actually know about different cultures. People seem to know very little about Africa, I think, which made me more... made me want to, sort of, give more information to people about Africa and, sort of, the diversity that we have there and, um, you know, what some of our values and stuff are. Um, so I suppose maybe those initial, those earlier experiences when I first came here, had made me, sort of, more sensitive to wanting to give people more information about that in a way. And I suppose that's, that's then what I do when, when we're	<p>Shame – strong word. Is there an underlying shame about where she's from or that she doesn't disclose this to clients?</p> <p>Importance of knowing her cultural background. It's a shame that people would not necessarily know where you are from.</p> <p>When first moving to England people had the assumption that everybody from Africa was from a black background. People would wonder how it is possible that she is from Africa as she is white.</p> <p>Importance of skin colour.</p> <p>People's disbelief about where she is from.</p> <p>She is uncertain about how much people actually know about different cultures.</p> <p>People know very little about Africa which makes her want to give information to others about Africa, it's diversity and the values held. So people know very little about her?</p> <p>Use of "there" might indicate comparisons between 'here' and the contrast between lack of diversity on training.</p> <p>Importance of early experiences.</p> <p>Her early experiences have made her give people more information about south Africa which she does in lectures when she feels it is appropriate and that information might be helpful.</p>
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Others assumptions</b>		
<b>Others assumptions</b>		
<b>Others assumptions</b>		
<b>Lack of knowledge, Understanding &amp; awareness</b>		
<b>Lack of knowledge, Understanding &amp; awareness</b>		
<b>Responsibility &amp; Appropriate disclosure of culture</b>		
<b>Sensitivity to cultural issues</b>		
<b>Responsibility &amp;</b>		





<b>Hidden difference</b>	really, sort of, shocked so I suppose maybe that, you know, it would be a shame that people wouldn't have known that was something that was quite a big part of who I am. Yeah, because I think, I've, I've taken a lot of things from, from Africa that are, sort of, really helpful and if people just make the assumption that you have, sort of, similar... because I think there's a lot of, sort of, some of the values that we have in Africa and, yeah, the things that we, sort of, appreciated are, are different from, from, sort of, British cultural values. So, I think, um, it's a shame that people perhaps wouldn't be aware of that, um, and maybe not sensitive to it, and not that they would ever be, sort of... I don't imagine anybody would ever, sort of, be horrible in any way, um, but I suppose if somebody is visibly from... different, from a different culture you might be more sensitive to the fact that there might be differences between the two of you, um, and your approach might be slightly different. Um, suppose with supervisors. I don't know, actually. Yeah, I suppose I haven't really thought about it, but again I think it is just something that I, um, that I end up somehow bringing into conversation. Um, yeah, I sort of end up somehow talking about the fact that I'm	<p>She feels it would be a shame that people would not have known about something that is a big part of who she is.</p> <p>She has taken a lot from Africa that has been helpful.</p> <p>She doesn't want to be "just" similar.</p> <p>The values and things that are appreciated are different in Africa to British culture. It would be a shame if people were not aware of this.</p> <p>People should be sensitive to difference.</p> <p>Appearing different means people will be more sensitive to differences. If you don't appear different people think you're the same.</p> <p>If some body is visibly from a different culture then you might be more sensitive to the differences between the two of you and your approach might be different.</p> <p>People treat you differently if they know you are from a different ethnic background.</p> <p>She hasn't really thought about it in relation to supervisors. She ends up bringing her background into conversation with them so that people are aware, which makes her feel better. If she didn't they wouldn't know.</p> <p>Supervisors haven't helped her to think about her cultural background.</p> <p>Always her responsibility to discuss culture.</p>
<b>Lack of knowledge, Understanding &amp; awareness</b>		
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b>		
<b>Others assumptions</b>		
<b>Importance of cultural identity</b>		
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Sensitivity to culture</b>		
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Sensitivity to culture</b>		
<b>Responsibility &amp; appropriate disclosure of culture</b>		



<p><b>Lack of knowledge, understanding &amp; awareness</b></p> <p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>quite offensive. Um, so sort of, I don't know, making jokes about the assumption that all white people from Africa are racist to, to, sort of, black African people, um, yeah, I suppose making reference to that. That is quite offensive to me, I suppose, because we're not. I suppose there is a large proportion of people in... white African people who are, um, and that's sort of, you know, historically there, but not everybody is, so I suppose, yeah, maybe if people were more aware of the fact that I was from Africa perhaps they wouldn't make comments like that. Um, I suppose... I don't know if that's really relevant, so I'm just thinking on training. I'm not, not sure.</p> <p>Maybe if we use the example like in Africa, sort of, academic achievement is, um, is something that's valued a lot, ah, because the whole schooling system is structured around, um, you can't proceed to the next year unless you pass, sort of, two sets of exams over the course of your academic year, so if you don't pass your exams you don't move to the next year, and they have, sort of, quite elaborate prize giving evenings where people are, sort of, given prizes for, you know, best in biology for the year, blah-blah-blah, so these things are, kind of... and</p>	<p>People outside of training make jokes that all white African people are racist towards black African people. Not all are. If people were more aware that she was from Africa they wouldn't make these comments in front of her.</p> <p>Privy to racist comments that wouldn't be if appeared different.</p> <p>Again says "don't know if that's really relevant" – her feelings/views are not relevant?</p>
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	<p>that's done from the age of about standard 1 which is like maybe about 10, so it's something that's, sort of like, quite a big part of, sort of, you know, growing up and I suppose something that's instilled in you for a long time. So, I suppose sometimes now, when I find myself, sort of, trying to be really, and maybe that's just a personal quality of mine anyway, but being really organised and, sort of, always trying to do the best at whatever I'm doing, um, I think sometimes people are, sort of like, oh..<i>P's name</i>..., you, you don't need to, you don't need to put that much effort in, and I'm just like, no, but I do need to because that is part of... whereas in Africa I suppose nobody would ever really question if you, if you went over the top or worked really, really hard on something or were disappointed if you hadn't done the best at what you were doing, that would just be something that would be normal. And I suppose maybe that's, sort of, giving some sort of indication that, um, people in England don't want to achieve very well, but I suppose it's more of an issue in Africa because if you don't do well you don't pass, and if you don't get really good grades then you can't get a job at all anywhere. It's really, really difficult. Um, whereas I</p>	
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	<p>suppose in England there's a lot more effort... um, a lot more emphasis, I suppose, on sort of doing vocational things so there's more, I suppose there's more option in, in, within the UK. Maybe that's just my view; there seems to be more options available to people, um, so yeah, maybe that would be something, but then people might not necessarily know that about Africa that would just maybe be something that would be personal to African people.</p> <p>IV      Yeah.</p> <p>IE      I don't know if that's a good example or not. I don't know any example.</p> <p>[laughter]</p> <p>IV      I was just thinking, you were saying that, um, that you felt at the beginning when we first started you mentioned that you felt it can be quite helpful being, you know, having your background and, um, and then you spoke about values that, um, that you... things that you bring with you almost from Africa, and I wondered, um, how that's, kind of, um, what you've brought with you in relation... and, you know, the things that you use in relation to training and things that are helpful as well.</p>	
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<p><b>Difference as advantage &amp; disadvantage</b></p> <p><b>Exposure to difference Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p>	<p>IE So things that I've brought from Africa that have been helpful with me on training?</p> <p>IV Hmm. And maybe there are some things that have also been unhelpful and...</p> <p>IE Yeah. I suppose the things that are helpful... hmm, let me think. There are. There are helpful things I know there are, it's just trying to articulate them. Um, yeah, I suppose training is quite, quite hard I think, clinical training's really hard. Um, so, kind of, in Africa I suppose there's a really, really strong... like I've just been saying, there's a really strong, sort of, hard-working ethic that people... everybody has that you need to do the best at whatever you're doing, so I suppose, I suppose that, sort of, um, that's really been helpful to me and really made me work hard to get to where I am and, sort of, makes, pushes me to, to, sort of, continue, continue to do a lot of stuff while I'm on training. I suppose because there's always, um, Africans, so there's so many different people there and there's always... there's a lot of difference around you all the time, um, I suppose it's... that's helpful because I suppose when I see client I don't necessarily just, sort of,</p>	<p>Always lots of difference around in Africa which might be in contrast to her experience on training.</p> <p>Having so much difference around you in Africa helps when seeing clients to not make assumptions that they have similar views to you. She perhaps feels this is a difference but seems uncertain about stating it as a difference.</p>
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<b>Others assumptions</b>	make the assumption that they would have similar views to me, though I suppose maybe not any clinicians... most clinicians probably wouldn't do that anyway, but, um, I think perhaps I'm more, sort of, sensitive to the fact that they might be different, um, and that looks aren't, um, don't necessarily reveal... Yeah, I suppose that... because I'm aware of the fact that people aren't... won't necessarily	She's more sensitive to the fact that clients might be different despite what they look like due to her experiences that people don't know everything about her from looking at her.
<b>Sensitivity to culture</b>	know everything about me by looking at me, um, I take that with me in the work that I do, though, just because a client has a particular way of... or looks a particular way or, um, I'm more, sort of, sensitive to the fact that they might be differences in there, and maybe that's what other people do as well. I don't know, but, um...	She uses her experience of being different but not looking different to aid maintain her sensitivity.  "More sensitive" – than others but still states this with uncertainty – contradictions.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Sensitivity to culture</b>		
<b>Uncertainty</b>		Always thinks about cultural issues (rules, ideas, and values) that might have influence when formulating which might get overlooked, especially in CBT. These might be lost if people aren't sensitive.
<b>Sensitivity to culture</b>	And I suppose when I'm doing formulations I'm always trying to think about whether there's a cultural issue that might be relevant for the client that I'm working with, um, because I think sometimes that gets overlooked especially, I suppose, in CBT but even in my CBT formulations I'm always trying to think of what the cultural rules or ideas or values might be, that might be influencing the person, which I think sometimes get lost if people aren't as sensitive to that. Um... What	Culture gets lost if people aren't sensitive just like her culture has.
<b>Sensitivity to culture</b>		

	<p>else.</p> <p>Hmm. I suppose in Africa I got the sense that, um, family was really important to people, um, family is very important, um, I don't quite know where I was going with that thought. I suppose... Perhaps my experience, having been in England, is that family life isn't perhaps as central to everybody's life as it is in Africa. I think people... your family is, is, is everything that you have, whereas I suppose my experience here is that that's not always the case. Um, so I suppose really it's helpful for me to, um, it highlights to me in the work that I'm doing that perhaps social and family support might not be... I suppose in Africa you might make the assumption that people have got really good social and family support around them, regardless, all of the time because that's just the way that people are. So maybe I'm more, kind of, sensitive to the fact that... and may be looking for the... looking for it more if there's... you know, what support people have around them. I don't know. I don't know.</p> <p>IV      And just because we mentioned unhelpful just now, I just wondered if there was anything that you wanted to say about that.</p>	
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	<p>IE Um, anything that's unhelpful... hmm.</p> <p>IV Maybe that's not the right word, but I'm not sure.</p> <p>IE I don't know. Um, I don't know if there's anything that's been unhelpful. Um... hmm, no I don't know that there's anything that's particularly unhelpful. Something might come to me as we talk. There must be something that's unhelpful... [laughing] there's always good and bad I just can't think of it now.</p> <p>IV Um, can you tell me about any challenges that you might have faced in making your choice to, um, to do clinical psychology training?</p> <p>IE Um, in relation to my background or just in general?</p> <p>IV Yeah, in relation to your background and maybe more in general, if you can, you know, maybe in relation to family or...?</p> <p>IE Um, I suppose one thing is that, um... I don't know. Maybe I was just... maybe at that age that I was still living in Africa I didn't really know anything about psychology and neither did anybody in my family, um, neither did any of my friends. It wasn't something... it wasn't like a</p>	
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	<p>massive subject. I think, again, that's linked to the fact that Africa is quite academic and very much about, um... so it's all about, sort of, biology, chemistry, physics, maths, um, English, things like other skills that you can use within the work zone, typing, accounting, um, home economics, those sort of things. There wasn't really a psychology element in anything so maybe one of the challenges was that my choice to do psychology, because no one in my family really knew much about it, I think it seemed a bit like you're not doing a sciencey sort of subject, and my sister did chemical engineering which is very much a science subject. I've no idea why she did it. But, yeah, so perhaps maybe one of the challenges was that, ah, people... I suppose still even now in my family they don't see it as being a serious... it's not as serious a subject as a more science or maths based subject. Um, so yeah, I do...</p> <p>One of my cousins recently said to me, oh I heard that you're becoming a professional student now, and I was like, it's a bit different than just being a... so I don't think people, um, always understand perhaps because psychology isn't... I mean, although saying that, just about all of our lecturers are from Africa which is just</p>	
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<p><b>Complex cultural identity</b></p>	<p>ridiculous. Everybody who does psychodynamic teaching seems to be from Africa so there's obviously a large, sort of, portion of, you know, the large world of psychology in Africa, but I just knew nothing about it. I think unless you're in that world or you know someone who's in that world then you wouldn't really know much about it which is what my family's like. Nobody really... and my friends... nobody really knows about psychology, what it's about, um, so yeah, I think I had an interest in it. I think perhaps if I'd stayed in Africa I wouldn't necessarily have gone down the same route, um, I think I probably would've been, ah, pushed more into something that was more science or math based, although psychology is scientific but I suppose it's not seen as, like biology or chemistry.</p> <p>Um, so yeah, maybe that was a challenge and maybe it's almost like proving that it's worthwhile. Maybe sometimes I feel like I need to prove that it's a worthwhile thing to do, um, I feel like it's worthwhile.</p> <p>Um, Yeah. I think it was maybe... I don't know that it was a challenge, maybe only with the word limit explaining all of my, sort of, moving around in, on the form to explain, sort of, how</p>	<p>Due to the word limit on the application form, it was a challenge to explain her experiences of moving around. She can't be defined in such a small space.</p> <p>Even on the form she felt she had to explain herself.</p>
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	<p>it is that I've, sort of, come to be a particular, um, maybe my work experiences and my... Though I think that that was actually something that stood in my favour having, sort of, you know, experiences from different cultures and backgrounds, I think that probably stood, um, on the positive side for me. Um, yeah, um, yeah it's been a challenge. I suppose the fact that clinical training is, um, really hard to get onto and you won't necessarily get on the first time you do get on, and I think that, kind of, perhaps goes against everything that I've ever done because I've done really well at all the things I've ever done, and, um, so I, I applied twice to get on, so the first time I didn't get on. I had two interviews but I didn't get on. Um, that was really hard and I suppose that really made me think about the fact that you can't always be the best at whatever you're doing, and it's maybe helped me to think a bit, um, a bit more wide, wider about that, because that is helpful in clinical psychology anyway, the fact that, um, whatever you do is not going to be the best because you're going on information that you've got and the experience that you have, and even if you do your best you won't necessarily change something, so I think I had to learn that you just can't do just something just</p>	<p>She believes that her experiences of different cultures worked in her favour in the application process.</p> <p>Her background aided her to get on training.</p> <p>Contradiction – it has been a challenge.</p>
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	<p>right. Um, so I think maybe that was, um, initially that was a bit of a challenge for me. Um, but I, sort of, turned it round now to try and get some perspective on that. Yeah. [laughs]</p> <p>IV Um, how do you think training might have influenced your identity?</p> <p>IE How might it have influenced my identity? Hmm. I don't know. Like, in what way? Do you mean like, um, how I come across to other people or the way that I identify with myself?</p> <p>IV Um, I think either of those and whether, kind of, do you see yourself different, differently now in compared to when you first started training or...?</p> <p>IE Um, I think training has definitely made me think a lot more about myself and the way that I, um, yeah, it's really made me, um, evaluate a lot of things and I think I, I'm getting to know myself better. I think... I mean, I've been doing the course for about, what, like a half a year now, I'm in my first year, ah, I think I am a different person to the one that started the course. It hasn't been that long but I know that a lot of other people have said that. Um, maybe, yeah, maybe it's made me think more about</p>	
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	<p>the things that I bring with me and how those might be helpful and unhelpful. Um, yeah, and, sort of, what that, yeah, how that would work in... yeah. I suppose... yeah. My identity with other people. Maybe, um, I don't now being on the training course, um, that might sound like a really silly thing to say... Yeah, I suppose when I'm talking to... when I speak to my family from Africa they, um, they always say, oh what you're doing, I say I'm doing a doctorate now, and that's almost... I don't if that's... whereas before when I said I'm an assistant psychologist, they were, like, okay. Now when I'm saying I'm doing a doctorate, it almost makes it seem more serious. I suppose it is a lot more serious but I think, in their eyes, perhaps that means that it's... that it is actually something that's, um, yeah, so I suppose it become... whereas maybe in England if people ask me what I'm doing, I just say, I'm doing clinical psychology training. I wouldn't necessarily say that I'm doing a doctorate so I suppose it depends on who, who I'm talking to and that's, kind of, linked to where I'm from in that way I suppose. Yeah, your background always has an influence on the way that you are around other people, I suppose and where you're from. Hmm.</p>	
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	<p>IV      What about how training might have influenced your beliefs or behaviours in your personal life, and how that might be related to being from your background?</p> <p>IE      Some beliefs and behaviours in my personal life. I don't know. I suppose... I suppose training's made me more aware of perhaps... I mean I was quite... obviously interpersonally did fairly well, or I suppose it would be a bit of a shambles that they let me on the course, but [laugh] I think maybe my... um, within my family itself, it's made me more aware of how we relate to each other, and I think maybe that's very much a African thing in terms of the fact that my family... I think in Africa it's kind of like you don't... um, you don't really talk about, or you don't really bring up issues. You sort of... um, you need to keep them private I suppose is maybe the best way to describe it. You don't... you don't necessarily... even within your own family. So if there was an issue... [laugh] a very bad way, a very bad dynamic that we have going on in most families, is that it's better to just kind of... to just let things get better by themselves, and not say anything. And I think</p>	
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	<p>training's made me more aware of the fact that I didn't think it was very much like that in my family: I thought we were sort of different. But I've reflected more on it now, and I've realized that most of my family from Africa, and most of my friends' families, behave in a similar way. So I think it's perhaps something about Africa. I suppose mainly that comes from time when... Like I suppose back in the day when there was sort of Apartheid and things like that, people didn't talk about bad things back then. A lot of bad things happened, but they just sort of let them happen. And you just don't say anything: you just kind of, um, hope that it goes away. And I think maybe a lot of families internalized that way of sort of approaching things. You just kind of leave it to just kind of get better. So I suppose training's made me more aware of the fact that maybe African people do that a lot: just kind of put on... just kind of put on a face to kind of get on with things. And also you don't want to like... Maybe that's the phrase that they'd use: you don't want to show yourself up in front of other people. So, yes, training I think has changed the way that I kind of relate with my own sort of immediate family. I think. It's made me think about that more. I think.</p>	
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<p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>IV And you said it's made you relate a bit differently. I mean could you say more about how it's made you relate differently?</p> <p>IE I think... um, I think the way that I approach things is slightly different, yes. So I suppose I wouldn't let things just... um, I wouldn't let things go, although I think it's better to... I mean... and that's something that's a whole... maybe one of the whole reasons I wanted to do clinical psychology. Because I feel that if you bring the issues to the fore, and you're able to understand them, and address them, then you can make a difference in a situation. So yes, the way that, you know, now. Whereas before, perhaps if something happened, I don't know, had a disagreement with my sister, or I disagreed with something that she was doing, I would just perhaps not say something to avoid conflict. I think... yes, I think maybe that's what it's more about in Africa: you're always trying to avoid some sort of conflict. Whereas now, I'm a bit like it's not really going to be as bad as that. Just bring the issue up, and it's not going to... it's not going to be the end of the world. [Door]. I'm sorry. We just booked the room. Sorry. Okay. [Door].</p>	<p>One of the reasons that she wished to undertake a career in clinical psychology was to bring issues to the fore, understand and address them so that you can facilitate change.</p>
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<p><b>Training facilitating change</b></p>	<p>IE      Locked us in. That's slightly distressing. [Laughs]. We might actually get locked in the night.</p> <p>IE      Yes. Um, I think... yes, I think I just... I think now within my immediate family, I think I was aware of it prior to starting training, and so with my friends here, I wouldn't... I wouldn't do that. But I think more now within my immediate family, I'm more likely to... to bring up issues that kind of maybe change the way that we're used to being, because that's the way African people are. I'll bring issues up rather than just not address them because you just kind of hope that they go away. I'm more aware of the fact that that really doesn't work, and perhaps that's why there have been problems, previously. So yes, I think training has made me more aware of that. Um... and maybe understanding where that comes from, because, yes, it's made me realize that a lot of my friends from Africa, and all my family from Africa, do the same thing. So I think it's just... it's made me think about how I... made me think about where that come from. Yes.</p> <p>IV      Um, and what about in relation to how other people see you? I don't know if you feel that's changed or not.</p>	<p>Training has helped her to understand her cultural background better?</p>
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	<p>IE Since I started training, do people view me differently? I don't know if people view me... Well, maybe... maybe my family from Africa think I'm doing a serious job now. Maybe. That's maybe one thing where people view me a bit differently. Um... here, I don't think... I think my friends in England aren't... they're not really... um, I suppose they just see it as another job. I don't think they really understand it that well. So, no, I don't think so.</p> <p>IV How does that...? What do you think about... or how does that feel, that?</p> <p>IE People not really sure of what my job is? Um, I did have a very annoying experience, where somebody told me that, um, he was... he didn't want to talk to me because he knew that I did psychology, and all psychologists do is manipulate people into... into bringing up problems they don't want to talk about, um, which got me quite annoyed. Um... I think that just makes me think that our profession needs to... ah, make people more aware of what it is that we're doing. It just highlights that to me. I don't like it that people don't really... I suppose it makes me feel like people feel really guarded when they ask me what I do,</p>	
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	<p>and I tell them what I do. They're a bit like, oh shit, can't really say anything, because she's a psychologist can read my mind. I think that's what I feel people think. Um... Yes, and I suppose the only other thing that's made me change is that like people ask me like really crazy questions, thinking I'm going to know the answer. So my mum might say, oh yes, somebody... my friend was telling me about this and this and this, and, ah, their child is doing this and this and this. What do you think is going on? I was just like, I have no idea. [Laughs]. I might have some ideas, but I don't know that it would be ethical to give you that information. Um, so yes, I think maybe the only way that things have changed a bit really is that, ah, people think I maybe know more about really obscure things than I do actually know. Which I think just reflects maybe their lack of understanding of what it is that I do, or... yes. I think that's it, really.</p> <p>IV      What's been your experience, um, of your course, being a trainee from another background - and I know you've already mentioned some of the things – but is there anything else you can think of kind of around your experience of... um, of doing the course and being from a background that</p>	
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<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Uncertainty</b></p> <p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Lack of knowledge, understanding &amp; awareness</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p> <p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>you've come from?</p> <p>IE I think my university is... is seen as one that, um, pretty much takes, ah, very generic, ah, training group, so maybe in some ways I feel like I'm just... I'm just being... I'm just a part of that generic, mainly white British, group of trainees that were taken on. Um, I think there are some sort of diverse people on our course, but I think the view... the view is just from other people not associated with the course... um, I think the view is that, yes, a lot of, um, people on this course are just white British people. So maybe in that way I feel like people aren't really... yes, there not really aware of the fact that I'm not just like one of the other trainees, maybe. And we're different in our own ways, so yes. I don't know if that really answers the question. Um... I don't know.</p> <p>IV How does it...? What do you think, or how does it feel that, um, people would just kind of I guess lump you into that generic, kind of maybe just white British group that usually comes...<i>University's name</i>...</p> <p>IE I suppose I feel maybe annoyed by that, which I think then they... my experience of that is that I'm then compelled... not</p>	<p>She feels that in some ways she is just part of the generic white British training group that her course recruits. There is some diversity but those outside the course view her universities trainees as white British.</p> <p>She doesn't want to be seen as a generic trainee.</p> <p>"There are some sort of diverse people" – this use of language maybe implies that there isn't or if there is she is not sure about it.</p> <p>People aren't aware that she is not just one of the other trainees and that they are all different in their own ways. Even though look the same, trainees on her course are different.</p> <p>Uncertainty</p> <p>She feels annoyed that people see her as a typical white British trainee which leads her to disclose her cultural identity more than usual.</p>
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<b>Responsibility &amp; appropriate disclosure of culture</b>	compelled, sounds like I have OCD – no, I’m compelled to tell people [Laugh], or sort of highlight more regularly than what I normally would, that I’m not just a white British person: I’m also... well, a big part of me is African.	“Sounds like I’ve got OCD” and so what if she did – wants to be seen in a certain way. Trainees should be well functioning individuals.
<b>Hidden difference</b>	So maybe that’s, in terms of my experience, I feel maybe sometimes frustrated. Not frustrated, maybe that’s the wrong word, maybe like... um... Yeah, pigeon-holed into the same... I think that’s what... I think that’s linked to what I was saying: I’m always having to maybe	Again, avoidance of using a strong emotional terminology to describe her feelings.
<b>Others assumptions</b>	explain more what I mean by something, because I think sometimes the way I view things is quite different, um, but that’s kind of linked to my background and the experiences that I’ve had.	She feels pigeon-holed when viewed as ethnically the same as other trainees. She has to explain her view point more than others as she views things differently due to her background and experiences.
<b>Need to explain self to others</b>	Um, and because people make the assumption that I’m just white British, I think I have to maybe explain more why that is; whereas people might have... Like I said earlier, if it’s more obvious that you’re from somewhere... or if you’re from a different culture, it might be more obvious that	She sees things differently to others.
<b>Hidden difference</b>	oh, perhaps some of her views might be linked to their cultural background. So yes, I think that’s maybe my experience that I’m just... I feel that I need to justify things maybe a bit more, or explain them more clearly than what other people would, I suppose. And I don’t	As people make the assumption that she is white British she has to explain her views further whereas if it’s more obvious that you are from a different culture then it is more obvious that views might be related to culture.
<b>Others assumptions</b>		
<b>Need to explain self to others</b>		If it was obvious she is different people might understand her more and she wouldn’t have to explain her self so much.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Need to explain self to others</b>		She feels she needs to justify herself more or explain more clearly than others.
		She doesn’t like being viewed as the same as other trainees as she is different.

<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p>	<p>like just being viewed as one of the other people, because I suppose I am different. I don't like being kind of lumped together with other people. So, yes.</p> <p>IV      Why is that you don't like be lumped together with others?</p>	<p>"I suppose I am different" – uncertainty.</p>
<p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>IE      I suppose because there's more... I feel like... um, there's more to me than just being... I suppose people have lots of different identities... um [door].</p> <p>People are opening the door again. Oh, it's next door. Um... yes, people have lots of different identities, and, um... yes, I suppose I don't like people to determine that I'm... that they assume that I'm part of. Um, and I think people sometimes have assumptions about Africa and African people, and, um, I think if they were aware of the fact that I was from Africa, they would see that... it would give them the opportunity to kind of have a different experience maybe. Yes. And they might be more aware of the fact that some of their ideas on Africa aren't quite... um, true, essentially. Yes.</p>	<p>People have different identities.</p> <p>There's more to her than the generic trainee – she feels she brings more?</p>
<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p>	<p>IV      And what sort of assumptions do you... have you found that people have about Africa that makes you more compelled to kind of...?</p>	<p>Doesn't like people's assumptions. She makes these sweeping assumptions about her own culture.</p>

	<p>IE I don't know. Maybe just like... maybe just like that example that... that people just assume white Africans are very racist and... um, I don't know... What other things that we... I don't know. Maybe we're just like a bunch of rednecks that kind of... I don't know... drive around hating black people, I suppose. I think that's... I think that's sometimes what I feel like people might think about Africa. Um... yes, maybe that's... I think that's sometimes the experience that I have: that people sort of think African people are just a bunch of people who really don't like black people, which is really not the case. It is the case sometimes, but it's not with... with everybody. Um, yes.</p> <p>IV In what kind of ways do you think being from your background may have impacted on your relationships with... um, with other people in training?</p> <p>IE I don't know. Maybe kind of... I've talked about Africa people being really sort of... um, family's really important to African people, and I suppose because none of my family lives here, I think I see my... my friends as an extension of my family, so I think I invest a lot of time and effort into the relationships that I form with</p>	
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<p><b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p> <p><b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>them, um, so that the people that I become friends with are on the course. I don't know maybe if that was the question that you're asking, yes, but like the people that I become friends with on the course, I think I put a lot of effort into the time that I spend with them. Um... yes. I suppose some people... I suppose a lot of people are interested in where I'm from when I... when they do find out that I'm... when they found out that I was from Africa, um, so I think that made me feel good that people were interested in... in me when they kind of realized that there was a difference. Um... yes.</p> <p>IV And you've mentioned your kind of peers and other trainees, so what about kind of in relation to maybe, um, supervisors [door] or staff team kind of on the course?</p> <p>IE Staff, team on the course... I suppose I haven't had much contact with the staff team on the course, um, as yet. I know that we've had a lot of lectures and stuff. Um... I don't know. I'm not sure. Yes, I'm not sure at this stage. I don't know. I don't know yet.</p> <p>IV Supervisors or other colleagues in kind of... on placement: any... any impact on the relationships there of</p>	<p>People are interested in where she is from and it makes her feel good that they are interested when they realise that she is different.</p> <p>Feels accepted when people are interested even though they know that she is different?</p>
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<p><b>Need to explain self to others</b></p> <p><b>Companionship in difference</b></p> <p><b>Companionship in difference</b></p>	<p>your background?</p> <p>IE [Pause]. I feel like I say, if people are actually interested in finding out, maybe then they just try to generalize and you never think of it like that, and people are just always trying to ask me what a typical African people are like, and I find it hard to describe that to them. Um... yes. I don't know that it's necessarily impacted on our relationship. I think because I'm on placement with someone whose from Ireland, we're... um, we're always talking about the influence that our culture has on... on the way that we are and the way that we view things, so the Irish culture and my sort of African culture, so... Then again, I don't know if that's because she's different as well that maybe we're more likely to have that conversation. Um... Maybe I didn't grow up here or not as always... like... I don't know, I can't even think of an example, but, you know, where people have grown up in a particular country, they're more aware of things. So maybe some of the experiences that I've had are really different from the experiences that British children might have. So, yes, I don't always... I don't know that that would have impacted on the relationship that I had with people, but</p>	<p>She will disclose her background if she feels people are interested. People tend to want to generalise and find out what a typical African is like.</p> <p>When people do take the responsibility to find out about her background they do so to generalise.</p> <p>Especially finds it difficult to know what a typical African is since she no longer belongs to this typical group?</p> <p>Being on placement with a trainee who is from Ireland means that they discuss the influence of culture on identity. Perhaps they are more likely to discuss this as they are both from different backgrounds. She has found someone she can talk to as appose to her always doing the talking about culture.</p> <p>Able to discuss difference if there is some one else that's different. Is she also not visibly different?</p> <p>There's a difference that's difficult to articulate when a person hasn't grown up in a country.</p>
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<p><b>Difference as advantage &amp; disadvantage</b></p> <p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p> <p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p> <p><b>Uncertainty</b></p> <p><b>Culture as interesting and helpful</b></p>	<p>maybe just sort of being able to identify with things, similarities between us, not always able to do that, because we are different, and I might not have had the same experiences as them. I don't know that my supervisor's very like... I don't know that my background really influences much of our relationship. I think she's more concerned just with my... my clinical abilities. I don't think that she's really kind of on the sort of... Not that's ignoring it, I just think it's not... it doesn't really come up. Yes. Or hasn't come up yet, I suppose. Maybe that's the issue.</p> <p>IV And you kind of... you spoke about, um, sometimes maybe you might not have kind of the similarities as maybe some... a colleague at work who's kind of grown up here, and, um, I just wondered if there were any examples that come to mind, or anything that you can think of that...?</p> <p>IE Sorry, I think that's the thing I'm not really sure of what those experiences... I suppose people always seem really fascinated by like... um, like you know the fact that we... you know live in Africa, there's a lot of wild animals. Those sort of... So...yes, so that might... I think my experiences seem</p>	<p>She feels different so is not always able to identify with similarities.</p> <p>Her background doesn't influence her relationship with her supervisor who is more concerned with her clinical abilities.</p> <p>Idea that clinical work can be separated from the self.</p> <p>If it doesn't come up then isn't the supervisor ignoring it?</p> <p>Conversations about her cultural background do not take place with her supervisor.</p> <p>Use of word sorry is striking. Difficult to articulate the differences between her and those who have grown up in Britain.</p> <p>.</p>
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<p><b>Difference as advantage &amp; disadvantage</b></p>	<p>extremely different from people, sort of maybe like during the summer, if all they did was like maybe played football or, I don't know, go to youth camp, or something like that. Um, that's really, really different from what I used to do when I was a kid, um, so I don't know maybe sometimes I avoid talking about that too much because I don't want people to think that I'm showing off. So maybe that's an example of something how it might affect it that I don't... you know, I find it really... it's... you know, it's normal for me because that's what I used to do. Um, but I wouldn't want people here to think that I was just like trying to show off, I suppose.</p>	<p>Would not want people to think that she is showing off if she discusses her culture.</p>
<p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>IV      Yes.</p> <p>IE      I don't know. Maybe that's an example. I don't know. [Laughs].</p> <p>IV      And I think you kind of explained this quite a lot that I didn't know if there was anything else that you might want to add, um, really, about how you think people view your ethnicity.</p>	
<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p> <p><b>Need to explain self to others</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>IE      I think they would just assume that I'm British. I think that's the assumption that people have. Unless I bring it to their attention, I think they would... um, just have that assumption. I'm</p>	<p>People assume she is British unless she brings it to their attention.</p> <p>Unless she brings up where she is from no one</p>

<b>Others assumptions</b>	just someone who's... yes, just born and raised in England. Um... yes.	would ask?
	IV Is that more generally, but also on the course as well, so people associate with the course probably, again unless you bring it to their attention, they just would have thought...?	
<b>Need to explain self to others</b>	IE Yes. So I think you get... Yes, I suppose you, with the other trainees, unless I brought it to their attention, they wouldn't have known. I think everybody sort of... I think everybody pretty much knows now... I think everybody knows now, but, um, I think they probably forget about it every now and then, because... yes, my accent's not very strong; whereas the other African on our course, I think they're... it's more obvious to them all the time. So I think maybe if you were to put the two of us and have a conversation, I imagine people's perceptions of what we were saying might be slightly different, because it's more obvious that she's from Africa than I am. I think that's maybe... that's maybe it, yes.	Repetition of "I think everybody knows now" – uncertain? People on the course know of her ethnicity as she brought it to their attention but they forget every now and then. Her accent isn't very strong whereas the other African trainee's accent is so they are constantly reminded where this trainee is from. Due to their different accents, people's perceptions of what they are saying are very different, as it is more obvious where the other trainee is from.
<b>Uncertainty</b>		Her culture gets forgotten by others and perhaps at times by herself.
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Hidden difference</b>		
<b>Comparing self to others</b>		
<b>Others assumptions</b>		Compares herself to other African trainee who does not get forgotten like her?
<b>Comparing self to others</b>	IV Can you tell me about any specific strengths or resources that come with the position of being in training, from your background?	
<b>Hidden difference</b>	IE [Thump]. Strengths...	

<p><b>Difference as advantage &amp; disadvantage</b></p> <p><b>Training facilitating change</b></p> <p><b>Sensitivity to culture</b></p> <p><b>Sensitivity to culture</b></p> <p><b>Difference as advantage &amp;</b></p>	<p>Yes, I just think like strengths are sort of... There really hard-working people, put a lot of effort into the things that you do. You never do anything half-arsed, I suppose. You don't do something that you're not going to... that you're not going to, um, do properly, or finish. Um... yes, and just sort of by having some difference, it makes me more aware of difference in other people. So like I said with my clients, I might be more likely to try and think of what else might be going on, other than just like how they... what's presenting. You know, what other factors might be, um, relevant to the formulation that we're doing that might be related to culture, I suppose. Yes. And... you know, just being more aware of the fact that the way I view something is not going to be the same as how other people might view it, because of their cultural background, and so I need to be sensitive to those issues. You know my understanding of a particular way of doing something is going to be different to someone else, depending on, you know... yes, where they're from. And so I suppose maybe I'm more likely to ask people about their cultural background than maybe somebody who's not... not sort of... um, doesn't see themselves being different from the general</p>	<p>Having difference has made her more aware of difference in others (and perhaps more aware of her difference from others) and focused more on cultural factors. It has also made her more aware that the way she views things will not be the same as others because of their cultural background and that she needs to be sensitive to these issues. Her understanding will be different to others and so she is more likely to ask about cultural backgrounds than someone who doesn't see themselves as different from the general population.</p> <p>Can't judge a book by its cover. Looks beyond surface level with her clients.</p> <p>Tentative with what she says.</p> <p>Important distinction – “doesn't see themselves as different” as appose to others seeing them as different. This distinction perhaps comes from her experiences of being judged as white British.</p>
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<p><b>disadvantage</b></p>	<p>population I think, maybe.</p>	
<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p>	<p>IV Any kind of limitations or dilemmas that you feel might come with the position being a trainee, from your background?</p>	
<p><b>Others assumptions</b></p>	<p>IE I think maybe sometimes the assumptions people make about African people, maybe that might, and sort of assuming that I might be the same. Um... yes. I'm not sure I can think of anything else. Again I think there probably are more things but I'm not sure.</p> <p>IV And on a day-to-day basis, how do you deal with being a trainee, especially in relation to being a trainee from your background?</p> <p>IE I suppose I just of kind try and, you know, just do the things that I'm supposed to be doing on the course, and... um, I suppose like... I suppose like, for example, when it comes to things like that, I think I need to remind myself that, um, no matter what I do there's going to be... it's not always going to be, um, 100%, so I need to... I think I need to remind myself of that, um, because, that sort of need to be the best at everything kind of always seems to come up I think, or need to achieve academically like 100%. So yes, I think I need to remind myself of that. A lot. Yes.</p>	<p>A limitation or dilemma that comes with being African is the assumptions that people make and assuming that she is the same as white British trainees.</p> <p>Can't think of anything else – maybe doesn't want to betray her roots.</p>

	<p>[Door].</p> <p>IV Any other way your background might have influenced your approach to course work?</p> <p>IE Um... maybe it's going to make me more aware of, um... I think it's... yes, I think in Africa it's kind of... I think it's more about sort of the system that you're within, um, not as much about the individual. So what you do is kind of important and it impacts on your... yes, on your family and the people around you, so maybe when I'm sort of doing coursework, I might be more likely to think about the person's social context a bit more than just I suppose sort of Westernized individualistic... so there might be more focus on just the individual and the individual... I don't know. Maybe I'll take a more systemic approach to things sometimes I think, maybe. I'm more likely to do that I think.</p> <p>IV Yes. Um, can you tell me about any ways in which you might manage any difficulties or dilemmas related to ethnicity that might arise on training, and if you've got any specific examples?</p> <p>IE In relation to my ethnicity, or to another person's ethnicity?</p>	
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<p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p> <p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p> <p><b>Sensitivity to culture</b></p> <p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p> <p><b>Culture as interesting and</b></p>	<p>IV If you've got any, either/or really; anything that comes to mind.</p> <p>IE I suppose I'm just thinking. How many questions do you still have left, because I'm just thinking can we go somewhere else to finish? I think I'm slightly concerned about [laughs]...</p> <p>IV I'm keeping an eye on the time, and it's now, um, quarter to. So what I'll do is I'll make sure that I keep an eye, and maybe if we go for five minutes, and then...?</p> <p>IE Oh, yes. That's fine. [Door]. Issues of ethnicity. I suppose I just... I just feel like you need to be more, um, upfront about it, um, and that you just need to discuss it: you just need to discuss issues about ethnicity and not be, um... yes, not be sort of... shame's not the wrong word, or maybe sort of frightened of talking about it. Um... yes. So I suppose maybe with one of my clients, I'm just... that I'm working with at the moment, I think her culture's got quite a... a big impact on the work that we're doing together. Um, and so I think it's just about being honest that I don't really know much about her culture, um, but that I'm interested to know more about her, so kind of just bring in... yes, maybe</p>	<p>Concerned about the building closing. Not trusting me to keep an eye on the time?</p> <p>Need to be open and discuss ethnicity and not be frightened of talking about it.</p> <p>Does she take the role and responsibility in her cohort of being upfront and discussing diversity?</p> <p>Shame comes up again but is dismissed – I wonder if there is a sense of underlying shame.</p> <p>In the work she is doing with a client culture impacts on the work. She deals with this by being honest about the fact that she knows little of her clients' culture but that she is interested to learn.</p> <p>She is able to be open about her lack of knowledge.</p> <p>Important to be aware of these issues and talk</p>
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<p><b>helpful</b></p> <p><b>Training facilitating change</b></p> <p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p>	<p>just, um, be more aware of bringing those sort of issues forward and, um... yes, just be able to talk about them, and not being sort of... yes, just being aware that they're there and discussing them and understanding them, and then being able to use that information to help you to move forward. Not ignoring it, I think, that's maybe... most probably, yes; that's most probably what I would do.</p>	<p>about them in order to understand them and use them to help move forward in the work but not ignore them.</p>
<p><b>Training facilitating change</b></p> <p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p>	<p>IV Are you aware of any support structures that are available for you, um, in relation to your training?</p> <p>IE Being from a different culture and ethnic background.</p> <p>IV Yeah</p>	<p>Understanding culture is important to her.</p>
<p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p>	<p>IE Yes. I think there's a lot of stuff for black and ethnic minority groups, and, um, and lesbian and bi-sexual I think, and gay trainees. I don't know anything, um, that's available for people who are white, but not white British. I'm not aware of that. There's more stuff for black and ethnic minorities, I think that's... that's... they mentioned a lot about that. But they haven't mentioned anything about if you're... if you're white, but non-British white, these are support structures available to you.</p>	<p>There are a lot of support networks for BME groups and gay and bi-sexual trainees but she doesn't know anything that is available for those who are white but not white British. The support for BME was mentioned a lot but nothing was mentioned for non-British white trainees.</p>
<p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p>		<p>She doesn't see her self as able to access this support as she doesn't define her self as part of BME group.</p> <p>No support for non-British white people.</p>



<p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p> <p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>see mine as different from other people. It might be viewed as being slightly trivial, or not as important. Maybe. Not that they would mean it like that, but I think it's just like maybe they were more sensitive to the fact that the people from, for example, black and ethnic minorities need support to try and help to get them more involved in clinical psychology, because they are under-represented definitely, but, um, maybe just... yes. Yes, I wouldn't want people to think that I was kind of just being over-sensitive, I suppose. Yes.</p>	<p>If she brought any issues she had relating to background it might be seen as trivial or not important. Worries she would be viewed negatively if she spoke about issues relating to her ethnic background.</p>
<p><b>Culture as undervalued</b></p> <p><b>Hidden difference</b></p>	<p>IV Um, and what kind of support would you like to see put in place, or that you think would be helpful for trainees from different... you know, a mixed kind of white background, and not... who don't come under the BME?</p>	<p>Her ethnic background is unimportant.</p> <p>"Not that they would mean it like that" – making excuses?</p> <p>Silenced because she is part of the majority as well as the minority. Courses are perhaps more sensitive to the fact that those from BME groups need more support to get involved in clinical psychology as they are under represented.</p> <p>People from her background are also underrepresented</p> <p>She wouldn't want people to think that she was being oversensitive.</p>
<p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>IE I don't know. Um, I don't know that we'd need a specific sort of support. Maybe that would be nice, but, um... or maybe just having more opportunity to discuss difference, maybe that would be... like within the course, maybe sort of just being able to talk about difference more often, so that it's more obvious, and then more, um, perhaps, seen as more appropriate, maybe to bring up issues about... relating to difference. I think maybe that's what would be</p>	<p>Contradiction – worried to say specific support would be needed. Maybe specific support for trainees from a mixed white background would be nice or more opportunity to discuss difference.</p>
<p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p>		
<p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p>		<p>If difference was spoken about more often it might seem more appropriate to bring up issues. Difference not spoken about enough which leads to uncertainty about the appropriateness of discussing issues.</p>
<p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p>		

	<p>helpful: just more opportunity to talk about difference.</p> <p>IV Yes.</p> <p>IE Yes.</p> <p>IV I'm just aware of the time, and it's not kind of just going on for ten to. So, um, so shall we stop and then so that we can kind of</p> <p>IE Get out the building. Yes. That's fine. We can always go across the road.</p> <p>[Tape stopped]</p> <p>IV Any other kind of support would you like to see put in place for trainees with your background?</p> <p>IE It would be good to have more opportunities to discuss differences that aren't as obvious. Difference is discussed but more in relation to BME groups. I feel like, should we be talking about our experiences, maybe my difference isn't as important. Maybe we minimise people's experiences who belong to BME groups because ours isn't as obvious.</p> <p>In relation to teaching, difference and diversity teaching is more time limited than others, like we did a cultural genogram and ran out of time so we didn't get to discuss it. They said that we should meet after with our</p>	
<b>Unveiling difference</b>		It would be good to discuss cultural differences that are not obvious.
<b>Unveiling difference</b>		Uncertainty about whether she should talk about her cultural background as perhaps it is not as important and might minimise the experiences of those from a BME groups since her difference is not obvious.
<b>Unveiling difference</b>		Difference needs to be discussed more broadly. Might offend those from BME groups if discusses her difference as she is not as different – still part of the majority group.
		Time given to teaching on difference and diversity is less in relation that other topics. Diversity teaching not equal to other topics. This teaching is seen as not as important as other topics.

<p><b>Unveiling difference</b></p>	<p>cohort to discuss it but I don't think we were in a place to do that. Teaching needs to be thought about so that there's more time and opportunity to discuss trainees' individual differences.</p> <p>IV We are coming to the end now and I just wondered how you have found the interview?</p> <p>IE: I've been aware of the time pressure but it's been good. I hadn't had the opportunity to think before the interview. It was in my mind but not really about how it has affected me but I feel more aware now after the interview.</p>	<p>May not feel comfortable discussing diversity issues outside of a teaching space. More time needs to be given to discussing trainee's individual differences.</p> <p>Fear of discussing difference outside of teaching arena.</p> <p>The interview gave her an opportunity to think more about her cultural background and difference.</p> <p>No space to think about how her difference affects her.</p>
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## **APPENDIX 9b: AUDIT TRAIL - ISIS FINAL SUB-ORDINATE THEMES**

Complex cultural identity  
Exposure to difference  
Importance of cultural identity  
Training facilitating change  
Culture as interesting and helpful  
Sensitivity to culture  
Comparing self to others  
Self as different from others  
Others assumptions  
Similarities as advantage  
Culture as undervalued  
Lack of knowledge, understanding & awareness  
Need to explain self to others  
Responsibility & appropriate disclosure of culture  
Companionship in difference  
Unveiling difference  
Hidden difference  
Uncertainty  
Difference as advantage & disadvantage

## APPENDIX 9c: AUDIT TRAIL – ISIS's SUPER ORDINATE AND SUB-ORDINATE THEMES

### 1. Learning from difference

EMERGENT THEME	QUOTE
Complex cultural identity	"...little bit, complicated story..."
Exposure to difference	"...there's so many different people there and there's always... a lot of difference around you all the time...when I see client I don't...make the assumption that they would have similar views to me..."
Importance of cultural identity	"...my... background is...important to me"
Training facilitating change	"I'm more likely to...bring up issues...rather than just not address them...training has made me more aware...and...understanding where that comes from..."
Culture as interesting and helpful	"I'm quite interested in...cross cultural issues and in terms...being a trainee...it's helpful having had experiences of living in different cultures and...having to integrate...within them."
Sensitivity to culture	"I'm more...sensitive to the fact that they might be different... I'm always trying to think of what the cultural rules or ideas or values might be, that might be influencing the person, which I think sometimes get lost if people aren't as sensitive to that."

### 2. A stranger to others

EMERGENT THEMES	QUOTE
Comparing self to others	"...the other South African on our course...it's more obvious to them all the time...if you were to put the two of us and have a conversation...people's perceptions of what we were saying might be slightly different, because it's more obvious that she's from...Africa than I am..."
Self as different from others	"I might...have a slightly different slant on things"
Others assumptions	"...people make the assumption that I'm...English, British..."
Similarities as advantage	"...if they... had the assumption that you were white British...that might be helpful for them... some people favour white British and they could identify with you..."
Culture as undervalue	"I don't know that my background really influences much of our relationship. I think she's more concerned just with... my clinical abilities."
Lack of knowledge, understanding & awareness	"...sometimes I'm unsure of how much people actually know about different cultures."
Need to explain self to others	"I think is different from other people...I need to explain...my experiences...as to why...I might have a different view to other people."



### 3. Contradictions of invisible difference

EMERGENT THEMES	QUOTE
Responsibility & appropriate disclosure of culture	"I'm compelled to tell people...or...highlight more regularly than what I normally would, that I'm not just a white British person...a big part of me is...African."
Companionship in difference	"...we're always talking about the influence that our culture has...on the way that we are and...view things...I don't know if that's because she's different as well that maybe we're more likely to have that conversation."
Unveiling difference	"...you need to be more...upfront about it...to discuss issues about ethnicity and not be...frightened of talking about it."
Hidden difference	"...my accent isn't as strong...so people don't necessarily know that I'm not...originally from...England...I think that that gets lost sometimes."
Uncertainty	"...the thing I'm not really sure of what those experiences..."
Difference as advantage & disadvantage	"...if it was more obvious in your appearance you might...be able to identify that people with differences can still get somewhere..."

## APPENDIX 10: SUPER ORDINATE FROM ACROSS ALL 8 TRANSCRIPTS

### Interview 1:

**Learning from difference**  
**A stranger to others**  
**Contradictions of invisible difference**

### Interview 2:

**The dangers of difference**  
**The hidden aspects of culture**  
**The impact of cultural background**

### Interview 3:

**Aspects learnt from culture**  
**Positions produced when navigating two cultures**  
**Culture and the system**

### Interview 4:

**Impact of others**  
**Aspects of being between cultures**  
**Contradictions of mixed cultural background**

### Interview 5:

**Covert aspects when between cultures**  
**Gains and deficits**  
**Contradictions of culture**

### Interview 6:

**A unique position**  
**Issues not discussed**  
**Considerations for training**

### Interview 7:

**Future consideration for training**  
**Implicit versus explicit difference**  
**Impact of difference**

### Interview 8:

**Outcome of mixed identity**  
**Culture as fluid**  
**Choices of mixed identity**

## APPENDIX 11: FINAL MASTER AND SUB THEMES

<b><u>MASTER THEMES</u></b>	<b><u>SUB-THEME</u></b>
<p><b>THE DOUBLE EDGED SWORD OF INVISIBLE DIFFERENCE</b></p> <p>“I have to work a bit harder...(<i>which</i>) I think sometimes opens up opportunities actually...so maybe it's not so much of a dilemma” (Izzie)</p>	<p><b>Difference lost through invisibility:</b> <i>I felt different but not as different as and that difference was not acknowledged...so I was different but not different enough” (Natalia)</i></p> <p><b>The benefits and challenges of straddling two cultures:</b> <i>“it's certainly made me much more aware of diversity and also to try and get a better understanding of the culture that some body comes from.” (Sara). “It's almost like giving up a bit of yourself” (Anya)</i></p> <p><b>The ambivalence and uncertainty of difference</b> <i>“it's that dilemma of when am I different, how am I different, do I want to be different in this context or am I happy to be lumped in and just be the same in some ways.” (Alexandra)</i></p> <p><b>Needing to work a bit harder:</b> <i>“I have to work a bit harder” (Izzie)</i></p>
<p><b>UNCOVERING THE UNDERCURRENTS OF DIFFERENCE</b></p> <p>“we're very reluctant to...discuss, to bring into our clinical practice, to open the discussion about my cultural difference your cultural difference, how that influences our ways of thinking, what we want out of this interaction or from the therapy or things like that um, you know, and how it influences what is important to you” (Sara)</p>	<p><b>Difference as interesting but not relevant:</b> <i>“It might be viewed as being slightly trivial, or not as important” (Isis)</i></p> <p><b>Difference and diversity involving risk:</b> <i>“people see it as being a fairly dangerous area” (Sara)</i></p> <p><b>The impact of appearance on others responses:</b> <i>“because it's obvious...it will be more visible and people will probably try harder” (Anya)</i></p> <p><b>Others assumptions of sameness:</b> <i>“might just make an assumption that I'm from here” (Izzie)</i></p>
<p><b>THAT WHICH IS SOUGHT AND GAINED</b></p> <p>“I'm quite curious to find out what other people say maybe because there isn't so much of a support network and these things are not spoken about so maybe it leaves an individual like me wondering are those issues mine or do other people feel the same” (Natalia) “it's definitely...opened up my thinking and not to take things at face value...to try and think about people and their backgrounds, perhaps, slightly differently, to what I did before in a slightly less simplistic way.” (Joanna)</p>	<p><b>Increased awareness of self:</b> <i>“I am more open now...aware of things that can ...influence...I realized some of the patterns I had in myself as well more.” (Anya)</i></p> <p><b>The need for explicitness in diversity:</b> <i>“I think I'd feel differently in terms of how legitimate the difference was because someone else thinks it is too” (Alexandra)</i></p> <p><b>Safety and comfort in others diversity –</b> <i>“I identified at the beginning of the course the people who would be in a similar position and we talk” (Natalia)</i></p>

## APPENDIX 12: TABLE OF REOCCURENCE OF THEMES

Themes								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
<b>The double edged sword of invisible difference</b>								
Difference lost through invisibility	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
The benefits and challenges of straddling two cultures	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
The ambivalence and uncertainty of difference	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Needing to work a bit harder	x		x	x	x		x	
<b>Uncovering the undercurrents of difference</b>								
Difference as interesting but not relevant	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Difference and diversity involving risk		x	x	x	x	x	x	
The impact of appearance on others responses	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
Others assumptions of sameness	x		x	x	x	x	x	
<b>That which is sought and gained</b>								
Increased awareness of self	x		x		x	x		
The need for explicitness in diversity	x	x	x			x	x	
Safety and comfort in others diversity	x	x	x	x	x		x	x